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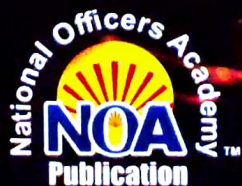
THE LEADING CURRENT AFFAIRS JOURNAL

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For CSS, PMS, PCS & Other Competitive Exams

"The **ULTIMATE TRAGEDY** is
not the **OPPRESSION** and
CRUELTY by the **BAD PEOPLE**
but the **SILENCE** Over That by
the **GOOD PEOPLE.**"

— Martin Luther King, Jr.



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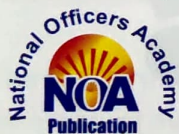
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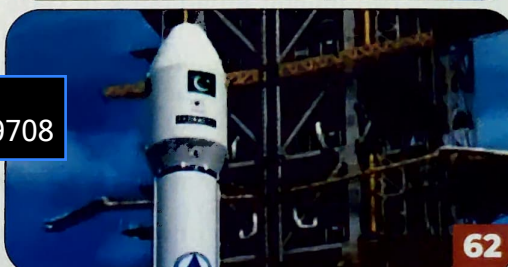
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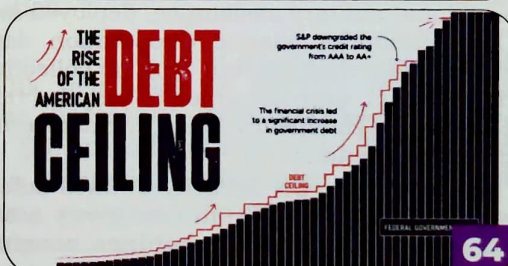
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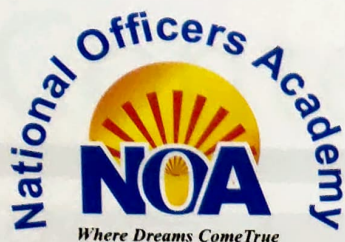
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EDITORIAL – Bail Out or Drowned In?

Escalating Tragedy: The Ongoing Israeli-Palestinian Conflict

The Gaza conflict, stemming from Israel's oppressive occupation of Palestine for over seven decades, was an inevitable crisis. Israel's relentless hostilities, including heightened aggression, settler violence, human rights abuses, and harsh apartheid practices, represent one of the most brutal instances in modern history. Palestinians have faced forced displacement, land loss, and continuous repression, with entire neighbourhoods demolished for illegal Israeli settlements, resulting in profound suffering. The over two million inhabitants of Gaza have endured a 16-year Israeli-imposed blockade, turning their lives into a struggle within what is often termed the world's largest open-air prison.

Following the October 7 military assault by Hamas, Israel responded with a fierce retaliation, enforcing a siege on Gaza and conducting indiscriminate bombing, which the UN human rights chief and the EU's top diplomat condemned as a violation of international humanitarian law. The toll was devastating, with over 2,200 Palestinian lives lost, including 700 children, and nearly half a million people displaced. Despite warnings from the UN and a humanitarian catastrophe unfolding, the international community, particularly Western nations, remained largely inactive. Western governments expressed unwavering support for "Israel's right to defend itself," avoiding explicit acknowledgment of civilian Palestinian casualties. The US, as Israel's primary supporter, pledged additional military assistance, deployed an aircraft carrier, and dispatched advanced armaments. The Organization of Islamic Cooperation denounced Israeli aggression, attributing instability to the enduring occupation, but took no collective action. Arab countries, even those with recent diplomatic ties to Israel, were not urged to suspend relations, and their normalization policies seemed to embolden Tel Aviv. An emergency Arab League meeting demanded the lifting of the Gaza siege but concluded with no further actions.

Once again, the UN Security Council failed in its primary responsibility for maintaining international peace and security. In an emergency session on October 8, the Council couldn't issue even a basic statement, as Western countries sought severe condemnation of Hamas without advocating for deescalation. Efforts by the Russian representative for a ceasefire and meaningful negotiations were in vain. A subsequent meeting on October 13 saw sharp disagreements, with Russia proposing a humanitarian ceasefire, but the P3 (US, UK, and France) showed no support. With no scheduled vote, it's unlikely that any action will be taken, leaving the Council neglecting its duty. This is not the first instance of the UN body being unable to act on the Palestine issue, similar to the long-standing Kashmir dispute, with numerous resolutions calling for a resolution and an end to the illegal Israeli occupation, including at least 88 Security Council resolutions addressing the Palestine question.

The UN's proposed resolution to the oldest dispute, advocating a two-state solution for a viable, independent, and contiguous State of Palestine, has been ignored. Israel, with strong Western support and backing from former US President Donald Trump, abandoned the two-state idea, opting for a onestate solution and expanding illegal settlements against international calls. The failure to act on resolutions reflects poorly on the global community, often due to a steadfast commitment to Israel, contradicting professed adherence to international law. UN Secretary-General António Guterres linked the recent violence escalation to a 56-year-long occupation, emphasizing the need for a negotiated peace aligned with the two-state solution. Despite pleas, Israel remains unresponsive, contemplating a ground invasion and reoccupation of Gaza, raising the risk of regionalizing the conflict. Regional normalization efforts, particularly involving Saudi Arabia and Israel, seem stalled. The ongoing lesson is the resilience of an occupied people's determination to resist, impervious to sheer military force and repression.

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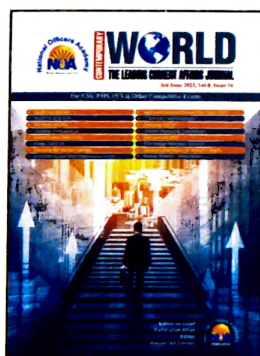
Farid Ullah Khan
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A Word from Editor's Pen

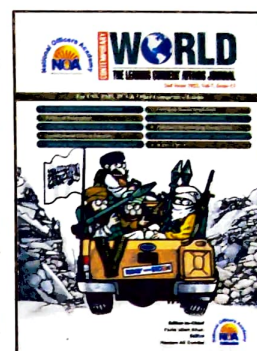
... Bon Voyage – The Journey Continues ...

In the name of The Omniscient, The Omnipresent and The Omni-Benevolent for the blessing of choosing me for this endeavor

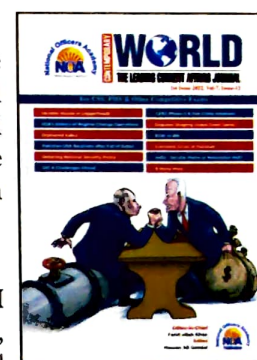


Firstly, I want to express my gratitude to all readers who provided positive feedback on our recent issue. Your comments are crucial as they contribute to our ongoing efforts to enhance and refine our magazine. Secondly, it is my great privilege to introduce the latest edition of our magazine. Substantial effort has been invested in creating this issue, including:

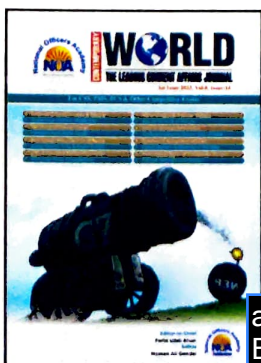
- Enhancing the quality of pictures, graphs, visuals, and colours to facilitate a better understanding of concepts for our readers.
- Thoughtfully selecting topics based on their relevance and significance for the CSS/PMS examination.



I believe this issue will prove highly beneficial for those preparing for the exam, offering the necessary facts and analyses for the Current Affairs paper. The special features and infographics sections aim to provide a competitive advantage across all subjects, particularly offering valuable information for the Essay, Pakistan Affairs, and International Relations.



A special thanks go to all the contributors for this issue, and I welcome articles from anyone else willing to contribute. Lastly, I invite your feedback and suggestions, which will play a crucial role in improving our next issue. I would also like to acknowledge Mr. Farid Ullah Khan (Editor-in-Chief) for his guiding presence and Mr. Muhammad Tahir (Assistant Editor) for his supportive role. At NOA publications, we are diligently working towards achieving excellence in academic publishing. To all CSS/PMS candidates, I extend my best wishes on your journey ahead. I hope our efforts can provide you with the competitive edge you seek. Best of luck to all of you!



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Hassan Ali Gondal
 Editor



BRICS vs. G7 ~ New (Old) vs. Old (New) World Order

BRICS Summit 2023: Aspirations & Frustrations

➤ Nuts & Bolts of BRICS

Amidst the escalating bloc politics and fluid global dynamics, the XV BRICS Summit in Johannesburg from August 22-24, 2023, defied negative expectations. Despite media, policy, and academic skepticism, the event succeeded, achieving consensus on key agenda items. Member states agreed on enhancing the use of national currencies in trade and financial dealings within the group and with other 'Global South' nations. Additionally, there was a consensus on expanding BRICS by inviting new member states.

○ Evolution of BRICS

BRICS, representing emerging economies like Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa, originated in 2001 from a concept by British economist Jim O'Neill. The inaugural BRIC Summit occurred on June 16, 2009, where leaders outlined objectives and strategies for global financial and economic challenges post the 2008 crisis. The New Development Bank (NDB), BRICS' formal institution, was established in 2014. In a significant move in 2019, the NDB approved its first non-USD loans. By 2021, Bangladesh, Egypt, UAE, and Uruguay joined the NDB. The initial authorized capital of US\$ 100 billion saw founding members subscribing US\$ 50 billion, with US\$ 10 billion as paid-in funds and US\$ 40 billion as callable capital. As per the 2022 IMF data, BRICS nations accounted for 31.58% of the global GDP (Purchasing Power Parity). The pre-expansion BRICS members constituted 41.25% of the world's population. The global GDP share was 32% in 2022, projected to reach 40% by 2040.

○ BRICS Membership

During the XV BRICS Summit's press conference on August 24, 2023, members announced the invitation of six countries—Argentina, Egypt, Ethiopia, Iran, Saudi Arabia, and the UAE—expanding BRICS from five to eleven members. Membership for these nations will be effective from January 01, 2024. South African President Cyril Ramaphosa emphasized the agreement on guiding principles for BRICS expansion and acknowledged the value BRICS places on partnerships with other countries. Over 40 countries expressed interest, with 22 formal applications in 2023.

○ Possibility of using National Currencies

China's mixed economy, Russia's uniquely Western-sanctioned status, and India's growing alignment with the West, particularly the United States, alongside its preference for trading in the US dollar, are factors hindering the traction of a common BRICS currency. Additionally, with the inclusion of six new

6 COUNTRIES WILL JOIN BRICS

22-24 August 2023 dated 15th BRICS Summit, following its conclusion, extended invitations to **Argentina, Egypt, Ethiopia, Iran, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), and Saudi Arabia** to join the platform. Their memberships will commence in **January of 2024**.

BRICS, aiming to establish a balance against the G7 and the World Bank, came together to diverge from the Western-dominated international order and announced plans to expand its memberships.

In the summit's outcome statement, BRICS emphasized its intention to introduce diversity into the multipolar power structure and reduce escalating polarization.

The acceptance of new members demonstrates the overcoming of certain concerns of the member countries and signifies the success of BRICS.

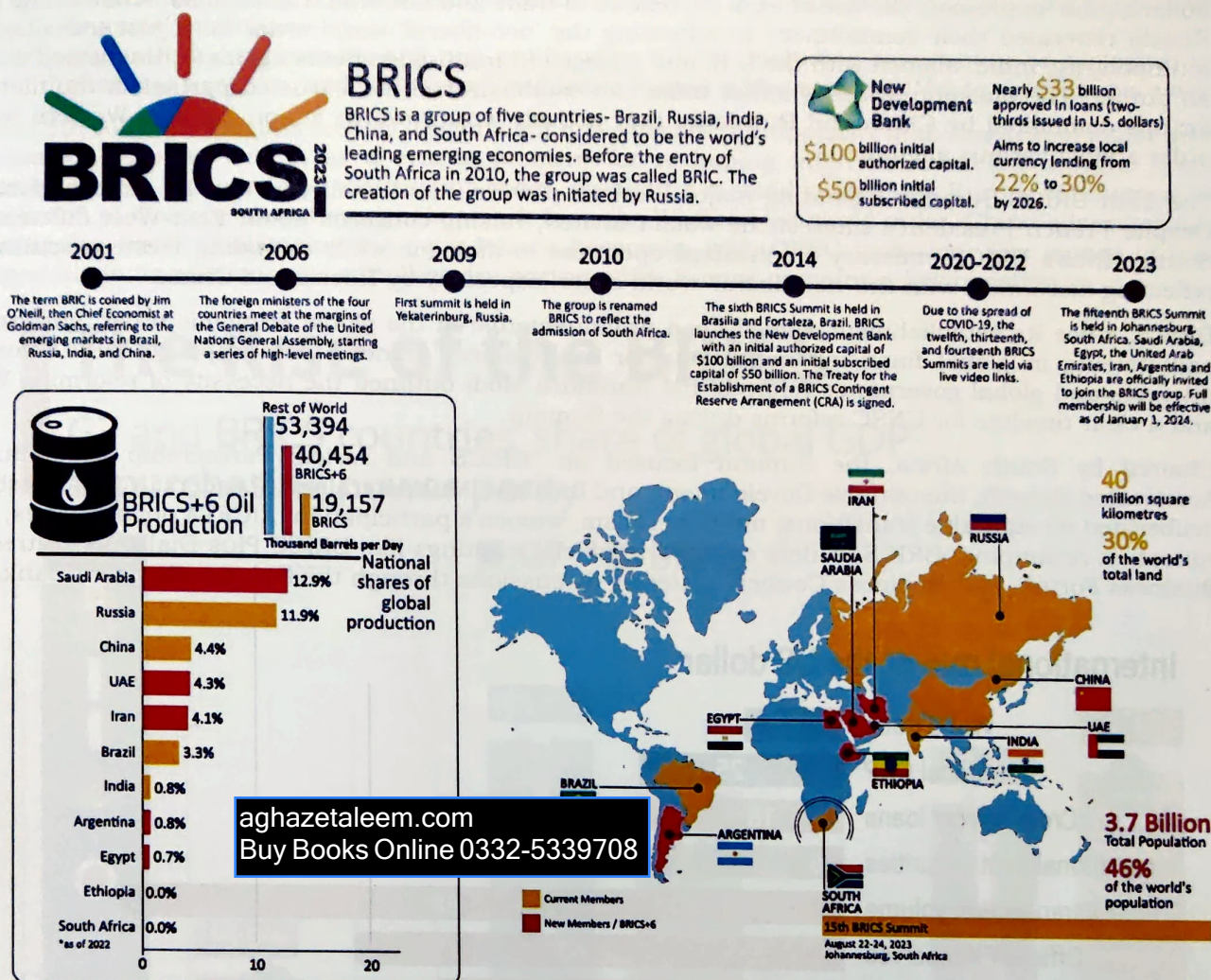
MEMBER STATES

BRASIL CHINA SOUTH AFRICA REPUBLIC INDIA RUSSIA

COUNTRIES INVITED TO MEMBERSHIP

ARGENTINA UAE ETHIOPIA IRAN EGYPT SAUDI ARABIA

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members, BRICS transforms into BRICS Plus, presenting both opportunities and challenges. While the expansion enhances geopolitical and economic influence, divergent interests among members pose challenges to the consensus-based decision-making process within the group.

○ Key Aspects of BRICS Cooperation

The current BRICS landscape is dynamic, marked by key aspects:

- ✓ Economic cooperation is a major force, fostering trade, investment, and discussions on reducing barriers.
- ✓ Political collaboration includes annual summits addressing regional disputes, international security, and global governance.
- ✓ Economic development varies among members, with China and India experiencing growth, Brazil and South Africa facing challenges, and Russia affected by sanctions.
- ✓ South-South cooperation prioritizes development projects, particularly in Africa.
- ✓ Informal dialogues supplement formal meetings, fostering trust and collaboration.
- ✓ Geopolitical interests, shared yet divergent, play a crucial role in shaping BRICS dynamics.

Anticipated On-Going Shift from Multipolarity: Insights from BRICS Summit 2023

Against the backdrop of escalating major power competition, the recent BRICS heads of state meeting emerged as a highly anticipated international event. The summit marked a significant step in the ongoing shift towards multipolarity, with discussions focusing on the group's expansion and the process of 'de-

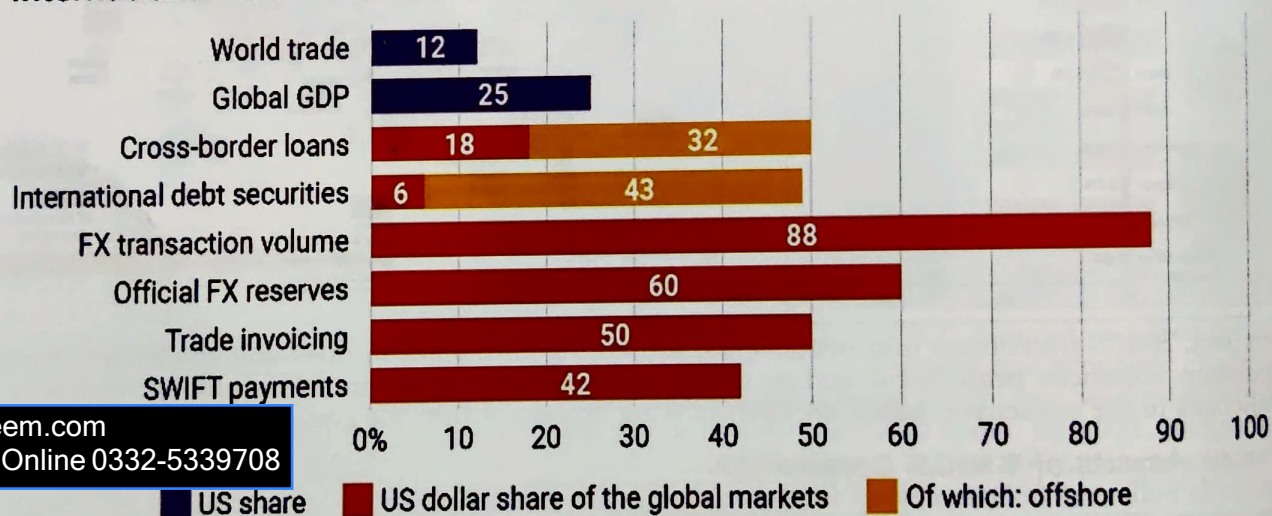
dollarization' to promote the use of local currencies in trade and financial transactions. While China and Russia reiterated their commitment to reforming the 'neo-liberal' world order for a just transition to multipolarity, India, aligned with the U.S. and engaged in multi-alignments against China, stood out as an outlier. The question arises whether India can establish itself as a trusted partner in multilateral forums dominated by China and Russia as they actively work towards shaping a post-Western world order amidst various alignments.

The 15th BRICS Summit, excluding major Western powers intentionally, invited 70 nations globally. Despite French President's interest, he wasn't invited, raising concerns about East-West differences. South Africa's BRICS emissary emphasized openness to dialogue while excluding Western countries, reflecting discomfort with the 'neo-liberal' world order, especially by Russia and China.

BRICS, since its establishment, aimed for a prominent role in the global economic order, advocating adjustments in global financial institutions for multipolarity trends. India supports BRICS for its interests and global governance reforms. PM Narendra Modi outlined the necessity of reforming WTO and a clear timeline for UNSC reforms during the Summit.

Chaired by South Africa, the Summit focused on "BRICS and Africa: Partnership for Mutually Accelerated Growth, Sustainable Development, and Inclusive Multilateralism." Leaders in Johannesburg deliberated on equitable transitions, multilateralism, women's participation, AfCFTA opportunities, and education revamping. BRICS leaders engaged in official meetings like BRICS Plus Dialogue, Outreach, Business Forum, and Business Council, fostering discussions through the New Development Bank.

International role of the US dollar



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The Summit's primary focus, BRICS expansion, revealed divergence between India and China. While Beijing advocated swift expansion to counter G711 and enhance global governance equity, India expressed reservations, emphasizing guiding principles and criteria for new member admission. The differing positions underscored a key contention between the two nations at the Summit.

Following three days of discussions, BRICS leaders reached a consensus on expanding the bloc and issued the Johannesburg II Declaration, a comprehensive document extending beyond economic concerns. The key points include:

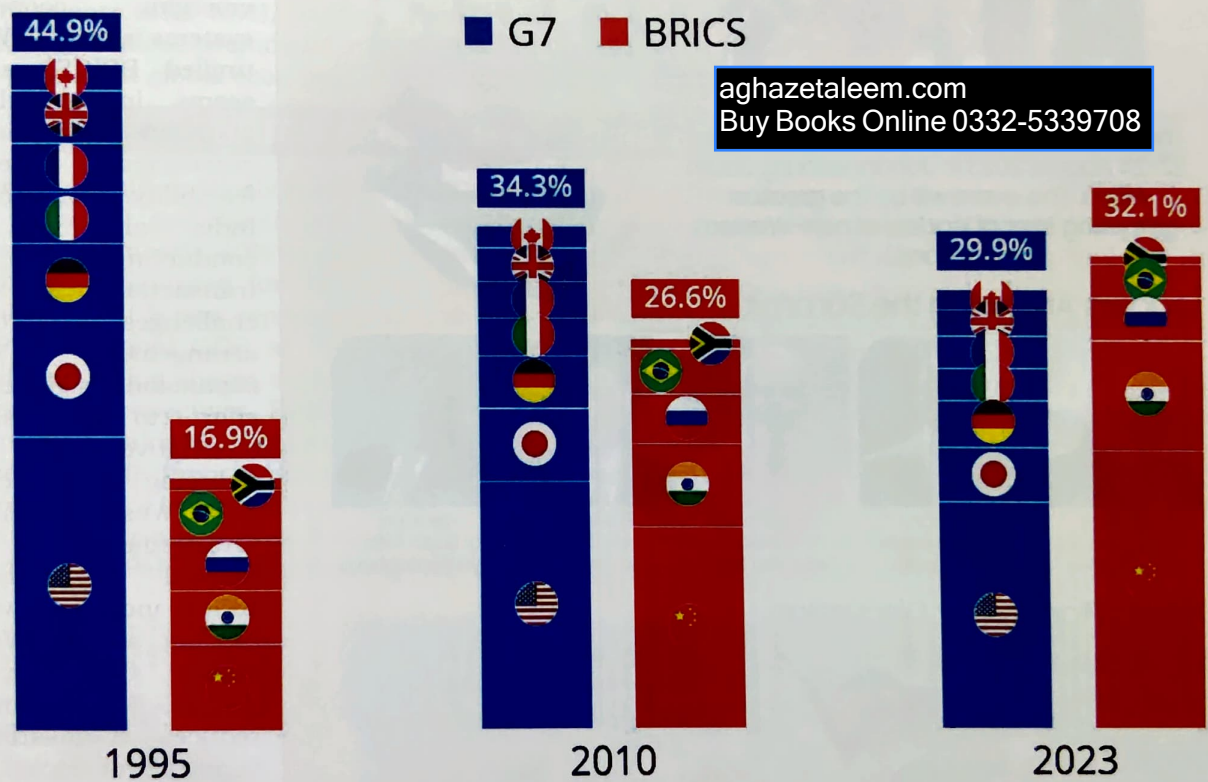
- ✓ Adding the Argentine Republic, Arab Republic of Egypt, Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, Islamic Republic of Iran, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, and United Arab Emirates as full members from January 1, 2024.
- ✓ Continuing the expansion process with agreed-upon guidelines.
- ✓ Encouraging the use of local currencies in international trade and financial transactions among BRICS nations and their trading partners, with plans for a future roadmap.
- ✓ Opposing trade barriers related to Climate Change that are not WTO-consistent.
- ✓ Hosting regular BRICS Political Parties Dialogues to enhance economic cooperation.
- ✓ Seeking guidance from the BRICS Think Tank Network for Finance on governance matters.

- ✓ Advocating for just, equitable, and democratic reforms in the global order, including political and financial institutions.
- ✓ Supporting disarmament and non-proliferation efforts, including conventions on biological and chemical weapons, and endorsing Confidence-Building Measures (CBMs) to prevent space wars.

The 15th BRICS Summit is seen as a significant move toward multipolarity in the context of major power dynamics. Experts view it as a crucial moment for reshaping international relations. The French President sees it challenging the existing order, predicting it could undermine Europe's influence. The exclusion of Western countries signals a shift from the Western-led world order. China advocates a fair multipolar world, challenging the petrodollar's hegemony with OPEC inclusion. The stance of India, especially in its relationships with Western partners like France, remains a key question.

The Rise of the BRICS

G7 and BRICS countries' share of global GDP at purchasing power parity



2023 data based on IMF estimates as of April 2023
Source: IMF World Economic Outlook

As Beijing and Moscow actively pursue a post-Western world order, New Delhi's position is crucial. The BRICS Summit gains attention for the expected meeting between Xi Jinping and Narendra Modi amid their border dispute. India opted for a virtual SCO Summit due to issues with China, protesting a new Chinese map. India seeks independent recognition and emphasizes not being "China plus one." Differences between China and Russia on BRICS expansion highlight the complex dynamics.

India's foreign policy dilemma involves engaging in both mini- and multi-lateral alliances to counter Chinese influence. While part of Eurasian and pro-South platforms, India participates in the 'Indo-Pacific' Strategy and QUAD. Concerns arise, with some, like Ashley J. Tellis, viewing India as a risky U.S. bet. Others, like Rajeswari Pillai, warn against trusting none while emphasizing genuine allies. In the BRICS context, India remains an outlier, avoiding clear alignment as rising powers navigate a post-

Western world. The challenge lies in gaining China's trust while pursuing global governance reforms, and the success of India's influence remains uncertain in the evolving geopolitical landscape.

BRICS Expansion: Great Promises & Potential

The recent BRICS expansion, welcoming six new members, reflects the nations' commitment to creating a coalition of emerging economies advocating for the developing world. The group's objectives resonated with about forty developing nations before the summit. Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi sees BRICS expansion as a departure from unilateral approaches, presenting an opportunity for diplomatic reconciliation between Iran and Saudi Arabia. BRICS has the potential to transform Iranian-Saudi relations from tactical engagement to a strategic cooperative model. The expansion is a notable achievement for China and Russia, enhancing the alliance's political influence. The transition to BRICS+ and the establishment of guiding principles strengthen the institution's appeal for fostering consensus in the developing world. New member states signify a departure from traditional Western-approved partners. President Xi Jinping sees this expansion as a historic development, reflecting BRICS countries' commitment to unity on a broader scale.

Considering how new BRICS partners use emerging cooperation systems is crucial. While a unified BRICS currency seems impractical, the adoption of national currencies for trade gains feasibility. For example, India and the UAE conducting oil transactions in rupees challenges the petrodollar arrangement. BRICS expansion signifies an effort to establish an alternative world order, reducing reliance on Western-dominated arrangements. Anil Sooklal emphasizes BRICS' inclusivity without holding an anti-Western stance. Over the past decade, BRICS aimed to reduce dollarization, facing obstacles in introducing a unified currency. About 88% of global transactions are in dollars, and 58% of foreign exchange reserves are in US dollars. If Saudi Arabia and the UAE join, BRICS' economic influence may strengthen, promoting alternative currencies. For economically challenged members like Egypt, strengthening ties with BRICS holds promise.



The 15th BRICS Summit will take place from 22-24 August 2023 in Johannesburg, South Africa. This event will be the greatest gathering ever of leaders of non-Western nations.



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Leaders Attending the Summit



President of Brazil
Lula Da Silva

Russian Foreign Minister
Sergei Lavrov

Prime Minister of India
Narendra Modi

President of China
Xi Jinping

President of South Africa
Cyril Ramaphosa

Topics Planned for Discussion

BRICS Expansion

Leaders are divided over the enlargement of the bloc, including the admission criteria. Russia and China are in favour of BRICS expansion, while Brazil is sceptical. India is undecided.



BRICS Bank

(New Development Bank (NDB))

- It was founded by the BRICS bloc in 2015.
- The goal is to switch to local currency.
- The NDB has provided \$33 billion in loans its five member countries.
- In 2021, Bangladesh, Egypt and the United Arab Emirates joined the NDB, bringing the number of members to eight.

Economic Cooperation

Trade and investment opportunities in sectors ranging from energy cooperation and infrastructure development to the digital economy and the labour market will be discussed.

BRICS+

It is expected to take place on the last day of the Summit. South African Foreign Minister Naledi Pandor said invitations to attend the Summit had been sent to 67 leaders from Africa, Latin America, Asia and the Caribbean.

Global South

The BRICS Summit in South Africa will provide a platform for discussing the problems of the "Global South" region, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi said.

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Egypt's trade volume with BRICS reached \$31.2 billion in 2022, with potential for increased exports and a role as a hub connecting continents.

Established in 2015, the New Development Bank (NDB) mobilizes resources for sustainable development. BRICS aims to evolve the NDB as an alternative to global financial institutions. The expansion of BRICS allows increased logistical coordination, impacting global aviation and supply chains. The inclusion of Saudi Arabia and the UAE may lead to reconfigured aviation-related supply chains. The expanded BRICS alliance includes leading oil-exporting nations, representing 42% of global oil production. Saudi Arabia's inclusion is economically significant, with an annual GDP exceeding \$1 trillion and a role in global oil markets. Recent efforts to diversify the Saudi economy, combined with increased oil revenues, signal potential economic strengthening. Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Faisal bin Farhan expresses eagerness for enhanced cooperation.

The UAE, a significant oil producer, can collaborate with BRICS on energy, renewable energy, security, and sustainable development. The UAE's diplomacy and commitment to multilateralism contribute to BRICS discussions. For Iran, the BRICS invitation aligns with its "Look to the East" foreign policy. Increased non-oil trade between Iran and BRICS countries indicates substantial economic potential. The rapid admission of new members raises concerns about BRICS' cohesiveness. The group's credibility as a global force depends on fostering consensus among diverse nations. Despite challenges, the BRICS collective can strengthen bilateral relations, reducing reliance on Western-dominated monetary arrangements. The NDB, gaining momentum with new members, has potential to support BRICS economies without prejudicial conditions. BRICS faces a considerable journey ahead to establish itself as a prominent global economic and political force.

BRICS & Pakistan – Road Ahead for Pakistan

Pakistan should seriously consider BRICS membership, given the group's economic prominence. China (#2), India (#5), and Russia (#8) rank among the top global economies, and by 2028, BRICS is projected to contribute nearly 40% to global economic growth, according to IMF data. As of April 2023, BRICS collectively accounted for 32.1% of global GDP at PPP, surpassing the G7's 29.9%. With six new members, BRICS now represents almost half of the world's population (55.75%) and holds around 37% (36.9%) of global GDP at PPP. Active in major international organizations, BRICS members hold significant voting shares at the World Bank and the IMF. From geopolitical, geostrategic, economic, and diplomatic perspectives, BRICS offers a suitable forum for Pakistan. As a SCO member, joining BRICS aligns with Pakistan's growth potential and desired pivot to geo-economics, facilitating diplomatic influence, trade opportunities, and access to natural resources. BRICS covers half of the world's oil and gas resources, a key advantage for Pakistan facing energy shortages. In terms of food production, BRICS countries contribute nearly half globally, with China, India, Brazil, and Russia as top producers. This is beneficial for Pakistan, addressing food and energy shortages through access to vast markets. BRICS



membership would grant Pakistan access to funds and resources from the NDB for essential sustainable development projects, providing alternatives to Western creditors like the IMF and WB. This move would alleviate substantial pressure on Pakistan's policy and decision-making processes.

○ Challenges for Pakistan Becoming Member of BRICS

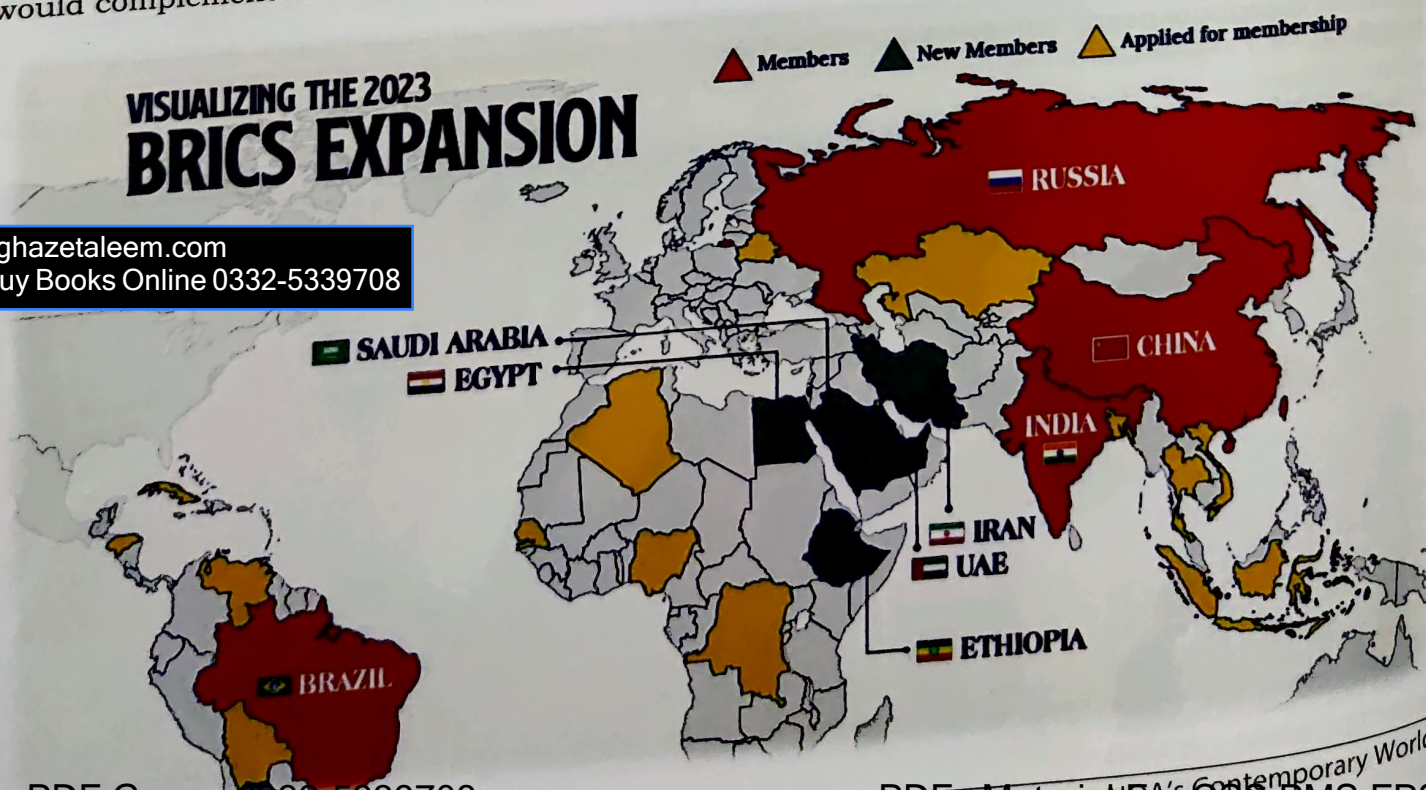
Gaining full membership in BRICS holds significant advantages for Pakistan, offering promising opportunities. However, this endeavour comes with its distinct set of challenges. Firstly, India's opposition to Pakistan's inclusion stands as a prominent hurdle. Additionally, Pakistan must adeptly manage political and economic pressures from its Western partners, who perceive BRICS as a counterweight to Western-created global financial institutions, challenging the global influence of the US dollar. Furthermore, Pakistan's current array of issues, spanning from political instability, economic stagnation, and terrorist attacks to climate change, food, and energy insecurity, may be exploited by countries like India within BRICS to weaken Pakistan's case. Achieving political stability and consensus among all stakeholders is crucial before pursuing full BRICS membership. Apart from India's opposition, there's a risk that other countries might succumb to pressure from external forces antagonistic towards Pakistan, potentially blocking its entry into BRICS.

○ Recommendations

The argument for Pakistan pursuing BRICS membership is robust, but there's substantial groundwork needed to make its bid compelling. Recommendations for Pakistan in presenting its case for BRICS membership include persisting in its candidacy despite anticipated opposition from India. India's consistent opposition will deplete its political capital within BRICS, creating fatigue among other members. To counter India's efforts, Pakistan must engage in an assertive diplomatic campaign, lobbying all BRICS members to support its entry and persuading India for the larger benefit of the organization. Pragmatic assessments of Pakistan's national capacity are essential to avoid commitments that may be challenging to fulfill or infringe upon its interests. Strengthening strengths, particularly in agriculture and food production, is crucial to showcasing Pakistan's substantial contribution to the group. Enhancing the national currency, PKR, is equally vital for seamless commercial dealings. Expanding the export portfolio and specializing in products are essential to compete with larger economies within the group. Ensuring policy consistency at all levels will instil confidence in other BRICS members, generating economic and political dividends. Additionally, Pakistan should promptly apply for NDB membership before formally applying for BRICS full membership, as NDB membership would complement and reinforce Pakistan's case for full BRICS membership.

VISUALIZING THE 2023 BRICS EXPANSION

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A Trap to Balance Growing CHINESE INFLUENCE???

Decoding G20 Summit 2023: Myths & Realities

What is the G20?

The Group of 20 is made up of 19 of the world's biggest economies, as well as the European Union. It formed in 1999 to discuss policy matters and financial stability.



ARGENTINA

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CHINA



FRANCE



GERMANY



INDIA



INDONESIA



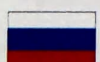
ITALY



JAPAN



MEXICO



RUSSIA



SAUDI ARABIA



SOUTH AFRICA



SOUTH KOREA



TURKEY



UK

These countries
account for

85%

of global GDP



US



EU

2/3

of the world's
population is from
these countries

The G20, a group of 19 top economies along with the EU, recently allowed the African Union to join. Chinese President Xi Jinping was notably absent from the meeting, and Russian President Vladimir Putin also chose not to attend. While the official declaration expressed disapproval of using force and violating the territorial sovereignty of any state, it didn't explicitly criticize Russia's invasion of Ukraine. This compromise aimed to bridge the significant geopolitical differences among G20 members.

From September 9–10, 2023, New Delhi hosted the G20 summit under India's presidency, themed "One Earth, One Family, One Future." Established in 1999 after the Asian financial crisis, the G20 initially aimed to unite major economies. Over time, it evolved to include heads of state, addressing global

issues like climate change, debt financing, and public health amid the 2008 economic crisis. Comprising 19 leading economies and the EU, the G20 represents 85% of global economic output, two-thirds of the world's population, and nearly 75% of global exports. It serves as a vital forum for international economic and geopolitical discussions. In 2023, India, as the host, focused on challenges confronting lower-income countries, addressing issues such as escalating debt, persistent inflation, currency depreciation, food insecurity, and the escalating impacts of climate change.

A significant announcement was the launch of the India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor, a large project meant to connect India with Europe through the Arabian Peninsula. This initiative is viewed as a rival to China's Belt and Road Initiative, which involves transcontinental transportation, energy, and data connections. It seems that the G20 and G7 are transitioning from being Western-dominated groups to more inclusive organizations, inviting more countries from the Global South. The expansion of BRICS and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) might have influenced these changing priorities, leading to the African Union's inclusion.

➤ Connecting Continents: G20 Summit's Landmark Transport Agreement

World leaders made an agreement at the G20 summit in New Delhi to create a new transportation deal. It connects the Middle East and South Asia by rail and ports. This agreement is essential as US President Joe Biden wants to provide an alternative to China's Belt and Road project. Biden said it's a significant deal that will connect ports across two continents and make the Middle East more stable, prosperous, and connected. The pact will benefit low and middle-income countries in the region and play a crucial



भारत 2023 INDIA

वसुधैव कुटुम्बकम्

ONE EARTH • ONE FAMILY • ONE FUTURE

Invitee Countries

- Bangladesh, Egypt, Mauritius, Netherlands, Nigeria, Oman, Singapore, Spain and UAE

India's Cultural Showcase

- Bharat Mandapam (inspired from Anubhav Mandapam)
- Bronze statue of Lord Nataraja (Chola style)
- Konark Chakra of Odisha's Sun Temple and Image of Nalanda University (used as iconic backdrops)
- Thanjavur Paintings and Dhokra art
- Brass statue of Lord Buddha sitting under Bodhi tree
- Diverse musical heritage (Hindustani, Folk, Carnatic, Devotional)

G20 Leaders' New Delhi Declaration

100% consensus on the Declaration

- Overcoming major differences on Russia-Ukraine war
 - Call for full implementation of Black Sea Grain Initiative
- Action Plan against Fugitive Economic Offenders
- Countering terrorism and money laundering
- Globally fair, sustainable, and modern international tax system
- Accelerating Progress on SDGs
- Multilateral Institutions (UNSC, Multilateral Development Banks etc)
- Digital Public Infrastructure (crypto, AI etc)
- Gender equality and women empowerment
- G20 Deccan High-Level Principles on Food Security and Nutrition 2023
- Global Biofuel Alliance formally launched



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Other Major Outcomes

India- Middle East- Europe Economic Corridor

- Shipping & railway connectivity corridor (India, UAE, Saudi, EU, France, Italy, Germany and US) - part of Partnership for Global Infrastructure Investment

G20 now G21

- Permanent membership of African Union in G20 (in line with India as the 'Voice of the Global South')

Global Biofuel Alliance

- Led by India, Brazil and US
- Other Initiating Members - Argentina, Bangladesh, Italy, Mauritius, S. Africa and UAE (Canada and Singapore - observers)
- 19 countries and 12 int'l orgs agreed to join

Climate

- G20 High-Level Principles on Lifestyles for Sustainable Development
- Pledge to 3x RE capacity globally by 2030
- UK committed USD 2 bn to Green Climate Fund



National Officers ACADEMY
The Largest CSS Preparatory Institute in Pakistan

role in global trade, according to Jon Finer, the US deputy national security adviser. The goal is to connect Middle Eastern countries through railways and ports, improving the flow of energy and trade from the Gulf to Europe by reducing shipping times, costs, and fuel use. The European Union, India, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, the US, and other G20 partners were expected to sign a memorandum of understanding for the deal. The exact value of the deal hasn't been revealed yet. This move is part of broader diplomatic efforts by the US in the Middle East, including efforts to make Saudi Arabia recognize Israel. From the US perspective, this deal can help reduce tensions in the region and address conflicts as needed.

○ War of Economic Connectivity Corridors - Proposed IMEC

The G20 Summit resulted in the proposal for the India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC), a network of railways and ports consisting of the East Corridor linking India to the Middle East and the Northern Corridor connecting Europe to the Arabian Gulf. The Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) establishing IMEC involved the governments of Saudi Arabia, the European Union, India, the United

|International Organizations|

Arab Emirates (UAE), France, Germany, Italy, and the United States. Initial estimates suggest a cost ranging from \$3 billion to \$8 billion for the development of IMEC routes, with India clarifying it won't be directly involved in financing or construction. While touted as a regional 'game-changer,' IMEC doesn't extend railway connectivity to all of South Asia. Saudi Arabia sees the corridor as a means to enhance energy connectivity and rebalance global trade with green materials and processed goods.

○ Complimenting or Challenging BRI?

IMEC holds the potential to link up with China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) through railway connections spanning from India to the Middle East and from Europe to the Arabian Gulf. It introduces a novel set of international 'ship-to-rail transit networks' that can complement China's extensive cross-regional port and railway infrastructure present in over 140 countries. The robust presence of the BRI in regions like Africa and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) enhances the geographical significance of IMEC. However, IMEC's railway connectivity is limited to India, Europe, and the Arabian Gulf. Despite this limitation, a network of BRI ports can contribute to minimizing loading and shipment times for IMEC countries, aligning with the corridor's objective of significantly reducing trade duration.

○ Financing Dilemma of IMEC

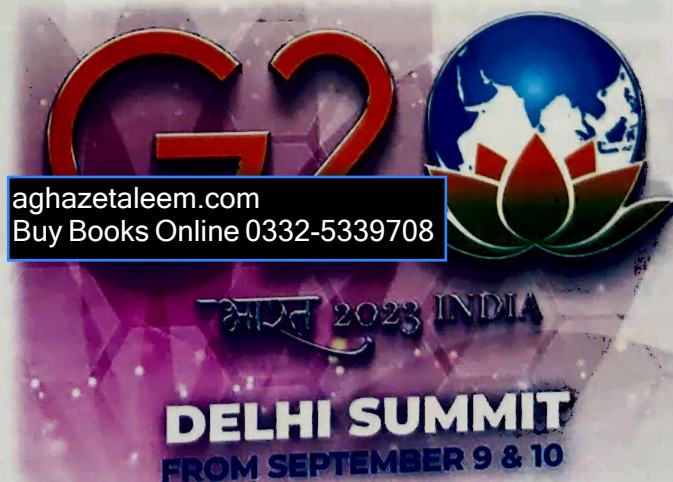
Despite being hailed as a "Game Changer," IMEC faces significant uncertainty regarding its costs and anticipated benefits, a notable departure from the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) with project values surpassing \$4 trillion. Saudi Arabia, India, and the United States have not yet established an "action plan" with their IMEC partners to outline a transparent financial framework for the corridor. As per the G20 agreement on IMEC, the participants aim to convene within the next sixty days to formulate this action plan, complete with specific timetables.

➤ G20 Summit – Surprising Consensus on Ukraine and Global Challenges

The G20 summit in New Delhi ended with a surprising consensus between the United States and Russia, avoiding direct criticism of Russia for the Ukraine war. Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi suggested a virtual meeting in November to review policy suggestions. The summit focused on human suffering in Ukraine, avoiding direct blame on Russia. Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov saw it as a success for India and the Global South. White House national security adviser Jake Sullivan and other nations praised the declaration's principle against using force. French President Emmanuel Macron highlighted that the G20 primarily deals with economic matters, while Japan's Prime Minister Fumio Kishida emphasized the impact of the Ukraine conflict on global issues. The African Union was admitted as a permanent G20 member. Discussions on food security and the Black Sea grain deal continued. Despite challenges, the summit achieved consensus on various issues. China's President Xi Jinping and Russia's Vladimir Putin did not attend.

➤ Weak G20 Response to Ukraine–Russia Conflict Raises Questions

The G20's response to the Ukraine-Russia conflict was relatively weak, highlighting a decline in global influence regarding this matter. This raises questions about the true intentions of the United States and the European Union on this issue. The group displayed significant divisions and diplomatic challenges. The resulting statement lacked substance and was defended by framing the G20 as an economic and finance-focused forum, revealing limitations in addressing critical geopolitical concerns. The G20 leaders delicately navigated the Russia-Ukraine issue, opting for a diluted resolution that refrained from direct criticism of Moscow or the United States. The declaration emphasized the commitment of countries to



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their respective positions as outlined in resolutions adopted at the UN Security Council and General Assembly. Despite Western countries seeking a more critical stance on Russia, the final declaration avoided endorsing such criticism and highlighted the importance of respecting each nation's distinct position on the Ukraine war, signaling a diplomatic victory for Moscow. The declaration, issued by India, acknowledged the human suffering and negative impacts of the conflict but struggled to propose concrete measures to address Western arms supplies and military escalations. Additionally, the document remained largely silent on efforts to advance peace talks or establish new diplomatic initiatives between Moscow and Kyiv for a peaceful resolution.

➤ **Global Debt Dynamics: Challenges for Major Economies, G20, and China's Evolving Strategy**

Major economies like the United States, the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, and the European Union are grappling with substantial national debts, driven by various factors including demographic changes and healthcare costs. These debt levels are a significant global concern given the economic power and influence held by these countries. Despite their debt challenges, the G20 has yet to provide effective solutions for developing nations facing unsustainable debt burdens. Some of the participating global leaders raised these concerns at a recent G20 meeting, but doubts persist about the G20's ability to address this issue fairly. While China has been criticized for its lending practices, it's essential to acknowledge its evolving economic strategy and adaptability to changing global dynamics.

➤ **Challenges in Achieving Consensus on Climate Change at G20 Summit**

Climate change was another central topic at the Indian-hosted G20 summit, but it ended with limited consensus. Despite meeting during a year predicted to have record-breaking climate issues, the G20 struggled to find common ground. This was partially due to the presence of major fossil fuel producers like Saudi Arabia, Russia, and Australia, as well as coal-dependent countries such as India and South Africa. The outcome was a commitment to triple renewable energy sources by 2030 while phasing down coal based on national circumstances. This outcome raises questions about India's pursuit of "strategic autonomy" and "omni-alignment," as relations between major powers become more challenging. India also risks becoming increasingly isolated from forums with an overtly anti-Western composition, like the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), where India holds the presidency this year, and even the BRICS, whose membership expanded during this year's summit. These developments strain Indian foreign policy and create confusion among observers.

G20 SUMMIT RESULTS*

SOFTER LANGUAGE AGAINST RUSSIA

The G20 countries agreed that states cannot seize territory by force and drew attention to the suffering of the Ukrainian people. It was seen as a clear softening of the position the G20 took last year, when it condemned Russia for the war and demanded its withdrawal from Ukraine.



THE PARTICIPATION OF THE AFRICAN UNION

The African Union has officially become a permanent member of the G20 with the aim of making the G20 more representative. This will give the Global South a greater voice in the G20.



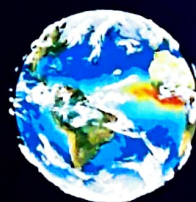
IMEC TRANSPORTATION CORRIDOR DECISION

In a joint declaration signed by India, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Saudi Arabia, the European Union (EU), France, Italy, Germany, and the United States of America (USA), the "India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC)" was declared.



PROGRESS ON CLIMATE CHANGE

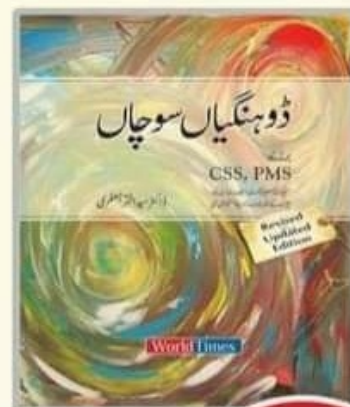
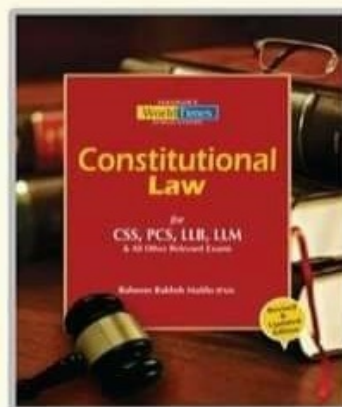
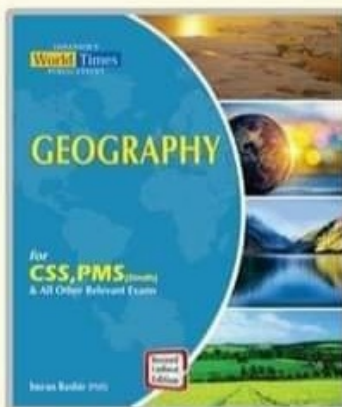
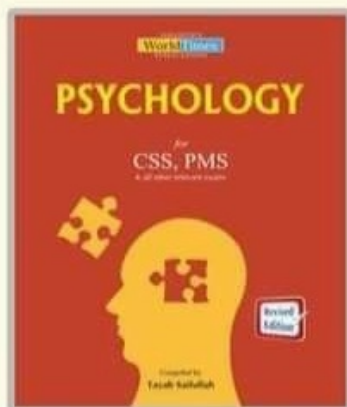
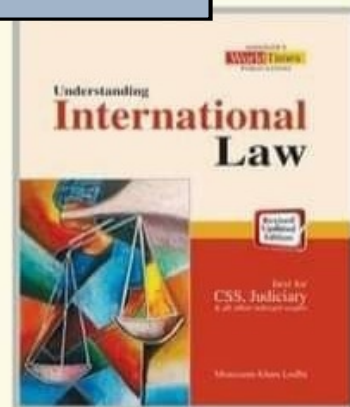
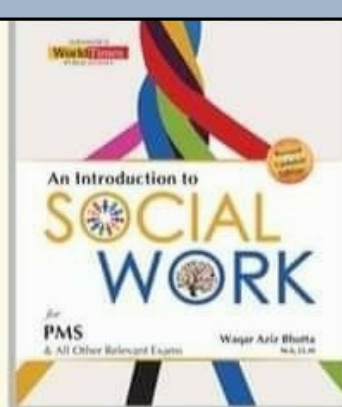
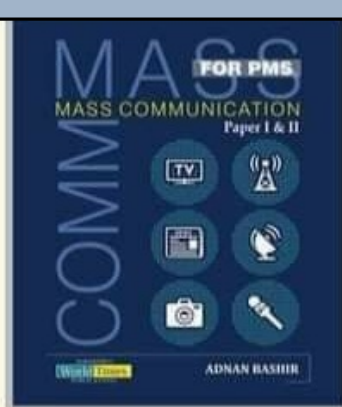
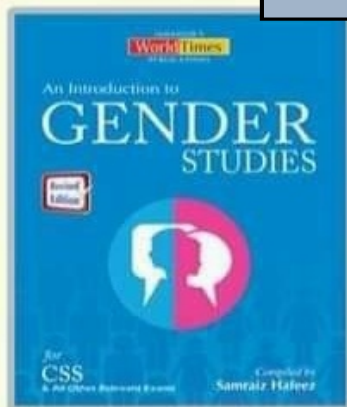
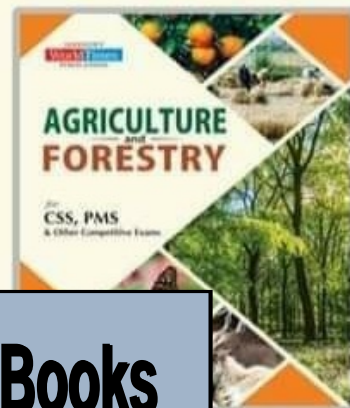
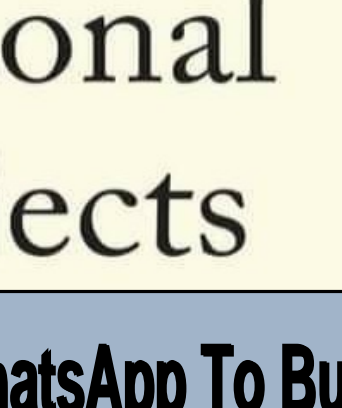
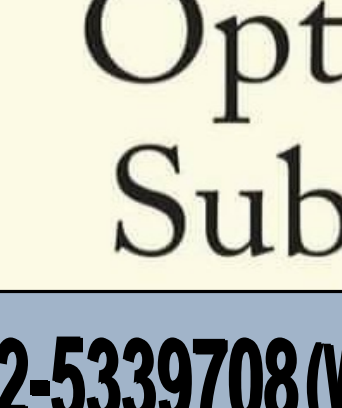
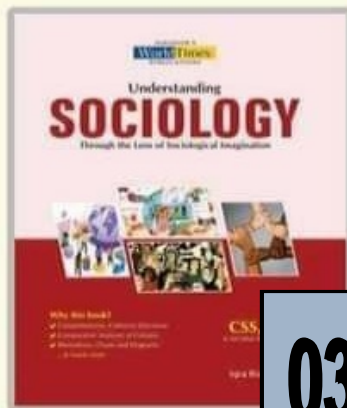
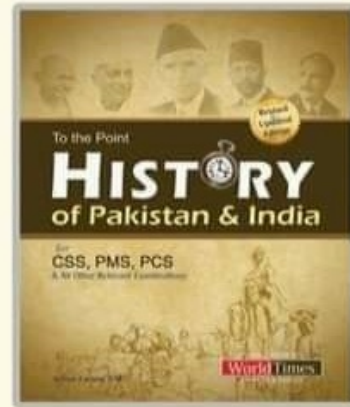
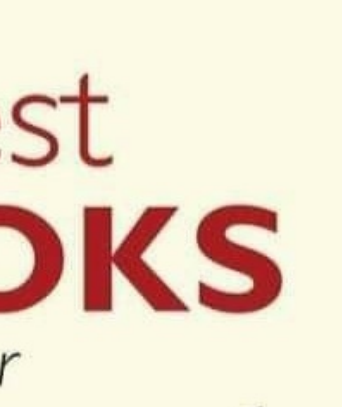
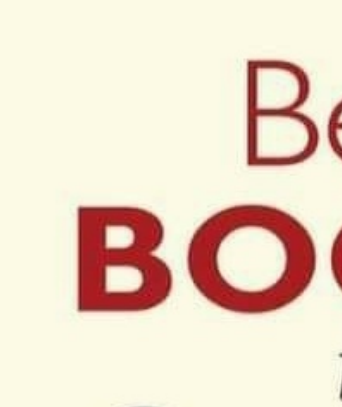
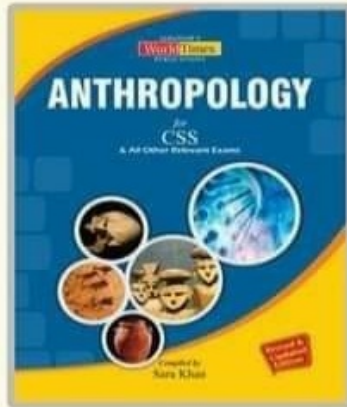
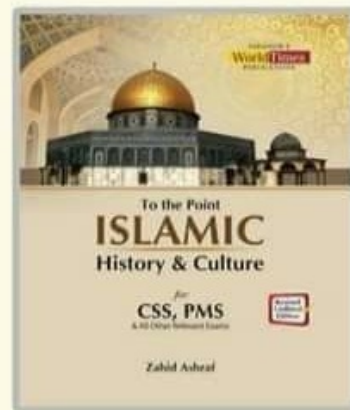
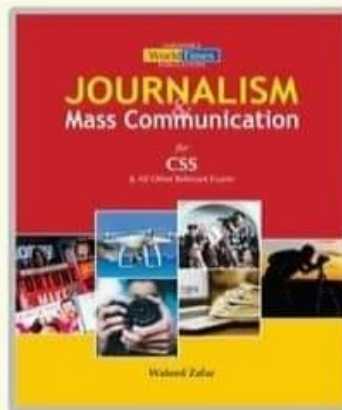
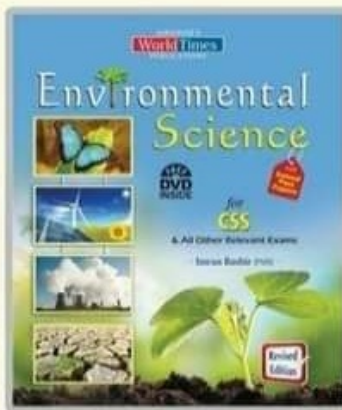
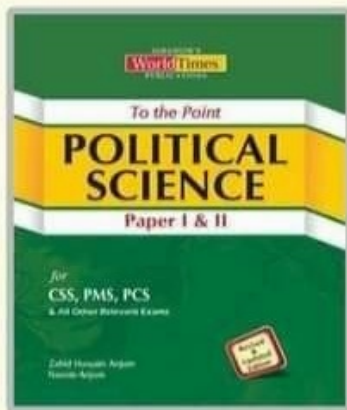
G20 leaders agreed to triple renewable energy capacity globally by 2030 and recognized the need to reduce coal power. It was also mentioned that \$4 trillion per year will be needed for the transition to green energy.



THE RISING GEOSTRATEGIC POSITION OF INDIA

The leadership of the G20 has been an opportunity for India to rise as an influential diplomatic and economic power. In this important forum, India has endeavored to contribute more to the global economy and promote international cooperation. Additionally, the G20 has been the first place in the international arena where India's name in Hindi, "Bharat," has been used.





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➤ India's G20 Success: Domestic Campaign or Global Impact?

The Canada-India saga and criticisms from Chinese scientists regarding India's moon landing have added complexity to India's foreign relations. In summary, while some may view the G20 as a significant success for India, it can be seen as more of a domestic campaign for Prime Minister Modi. India has indeed secured a seat at the global table, but concrete actions have yet to match the rhetoric. Critical global issues like post-pandemic supply chains, food and water scarcity, poverty reduction, rising oil prices, and global power dynamics were overshadowed by discussions about a potential corridor, U.S. efforts to counter China, and the inclusion of the African Union – an inclusion that, in my view, may introduce further challenges in the future.



➤ Key Achievements for India

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○ Global Consensus on Russia-Ukraine Conflict

The G20 demonstrated commendable unity amid the challenging geopolitical landscape of the Russia-Ukraine crisis. Despite debates on addressing the conflict, a consensus was reached, termed a "significant milestone" by US National Security Adviser Jake Sullivan. This agreement showcased the G20's ability to address pressing global issues collectively.

○ African Union (AU) Joins G20

The joint declaration welcomed the African Union (AU) as a G20 member, expanding the group to 55 nations with a combined GDP of \$3 trillion and 1.4 billion people. India stands to benefit from increased opportunities for multilateral trade and development initiatives with this diverse addition to the G20.

○ Political Boost for Modi Government

Hosting the largest gathering of world leaders in India in 40 years, the G20 enhanced Prime Minister Modi's domestic political standing. The government strategically organized working group meetings across the country, notably in Kashmir, bolstering tourism. As India heads towards state and national elections, the event generated both global publicity and domestic political support. "India wants to showcase its rising power and ability to deliver a consensus." - Michael Kugelman, Director of the South Asia Institute at the Wilson Center.

○ Introduction of New Economic Corridors

During the G20 Summit, India and Saudi Arabia unveiled ambitious economic corridors, including the India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor and the India-Europe Economic Corridor via West Asia. These initiatives, seen as counterparts to China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), garnered international appreciation, with leaders like US President Joe Biden acknowledging them as "revolutionary investments" capable of fostering global economic progress.

➤ Behind the Curtains: Criticisms and Controversies of the G20 in Delhi

The G20 summit in Delhi drew mixed reactions, with some applauding its diplomatic successes and others condemning it for extravagant spending and perceived political motives. Prime Minister Modi appeared to use the event as a platform for an early election campaign, projecting India as a global powerhouse, though critics highlighted the stark disparity between the summit's opulence and India's pressing challenges like poverty and inequality. Preparations for the summit included the demolition of slums, displacing thousands, and the use of large curtains to hide them from G20 leaders, while the mistreatment of stray dogs provoked public outrage. The summit's high cost sparked concerns, as the

funds could have been directed towards addressing India's poverty issues. Despite the criticisms, the G20 summit was viewed as a diplomatic triumph for India, particularly in its role in brokering a consensus on Ukraine, showcasing India's growing international influence. However, it raised questions about whether Western nations were willing to overlook India's human rights concerns to bolster it as a counterweight to China. Additionally, the summit marked India's efforts to counter China's influence by launching a major connectivity project in the Middle East, resembling China's Belt and Road Initiative, reflecting India's evolving global role and its relations with the West and China.



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➤ Critique of India's G20 Presidency

○ Joint Declaration - A Diplomatic Controversy

Criticism has emerged regarding the joint declaration on the Russia-Ukraine conflict during India's G20 presidency. While India and the West celebrate the consensus, critics argue that the language has been significantly diluted compared to the previous year. References to Russian aggression and withdrawal were omitted, leading to concerns about the declaration's effectiveness. Ukraine's foreign ministry spokesperson criticized the statement, stating that there was "nothing to be proud of."

○ Climate Action Promises Lack Substance

The G20 summit addressed climate change issues, with commitments to triple global renewable energy capacity by 2030 and a call for \$5.9 trillion in funding for developing countries to achieve climate targets. Despite claims of ambition, critics argue that the joint statement lacks concrete steps, especially in moving away from fossil fuels. The absence of new language on reducing coal usage, despite the G20 member states being home to 93% of the world's coal power plants, raises doubts about the commitment to effective climate action.

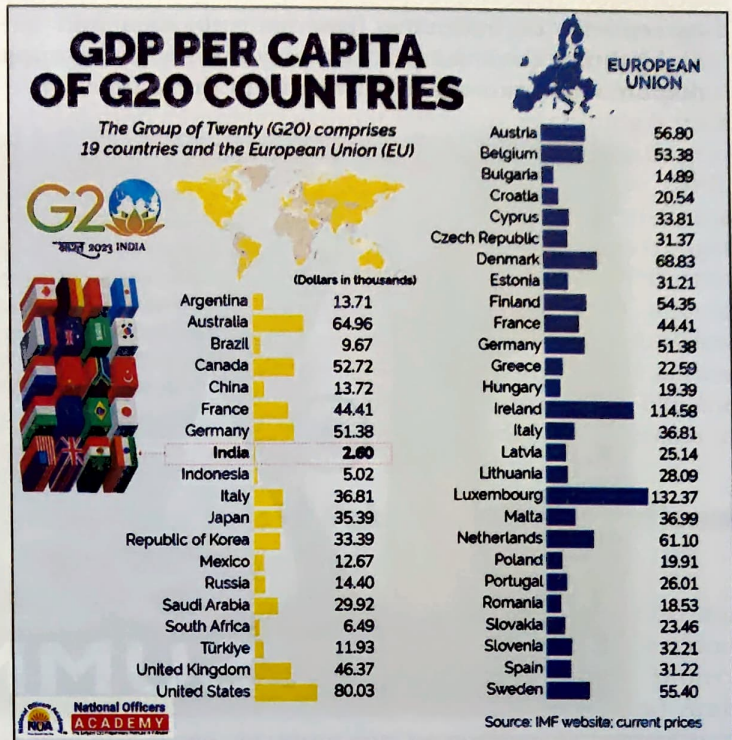
○ Absence of Key Global Powers Undermines Summit's Importance

The absence of Chinese President Xi Jinping and Russian President Vladimir Putin due to geopolitical tensions and conflicts greatly diminishes the G20's significance. The ongoing border disputes between China and India, along with Putin's avoidance of the summit following an International Criminal Court arrest warrant, highlight a strategic threat to the theme of "One Earth, One Family, One Future." The absence of these key anti-western bloc powers undermines the unity and impact of the summit.



➤ A New Era: BRICS+ and G-20 Reshape the Global Power Balance

Two major international summits occurred recently, each with distinct goals and outcomes. The BRICS Summit, hosted by South Africa, emphasized inclusivity and pluralism, while the G-20 Summit in India lacked China's President Xi Jinping but had Western leaders attending. Both summits centered around the "China factor." At the BRICS Summit, China's role in reconciling Iran and Saudi Arabia led to them and other nations joining BRICS+. In contrast, the G-20 Summit introduced the India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC), akin to China's Belt and Road Initiative, despite past Western criticism of the BRI. Notably, the G-20's 'consensus' on Ukraine reiterated universal principles and marked a shift in Western rhetoric. The G-20 is an extension of the G7 and leans towards a Cold War mentality, while BRICS+ led by China combines geopolitical and geo-economic goals, emphasizing de-dollarization. The future of BRICS+ and G-20 hinges on their objectives and visions. China's BRI, along with its economic initiatives, emphasizes inclusivity, diversity, and cooperation. In contrast, recent US administrations have focused on militarizing international relations. China's Strategic Culture is grounded in the Silk Road, the Great Wall, the Long March, and the 'Century of Humiliation,' guiding its march towards modernization without aggression. The summits illustrate China's strategic alternative for the Global South, marking a shift in global power from West to East, acknowledged by Western leaders. Pakistan's policymakers are urged to align with this shift in history rather than being influenced by tactical considerations or nostalgia for distant allies.



➤ G20 becoming G21? Inclusion of African Union

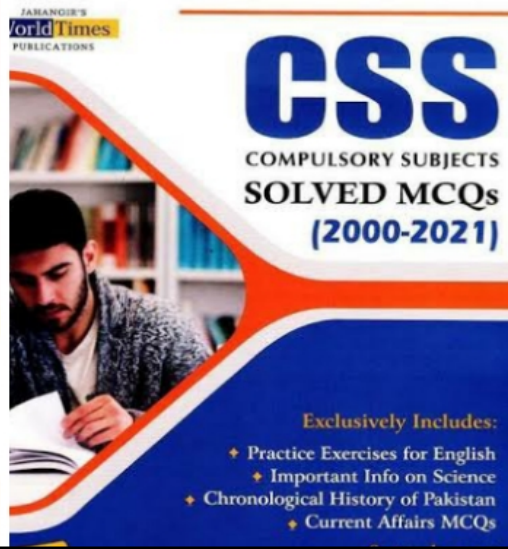
The Summit marked a significant achievement by including the African Union (AU), representing a breakthrough moment to enhance visibility and representation of the Global South within the G20. This development is particularly important for countries like China, as AU's participation is seen as crucial for addressing the financial, economic, and security needs of the developing world. While New Delhi views AU's inclusion as a major success, it wasn't guaranteed by India's G20 chairmanship alone. The accomplishment is attributed to substantial support from China, aiming to integrate the 55-member bloc into the G20 and counterbalance the group's predominant focus on Western interests and economic priorities.

➤ Gordon Brown's Insights on the G20 Summit and Global Economic Challenges

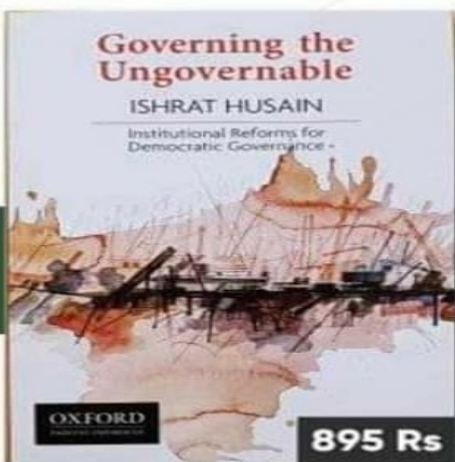
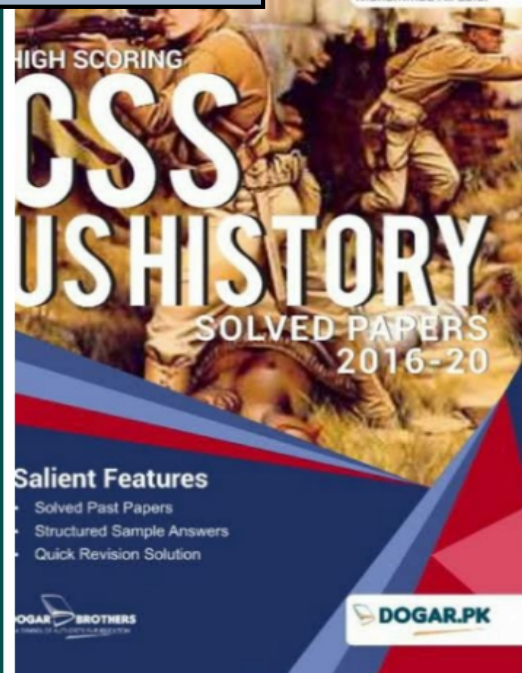
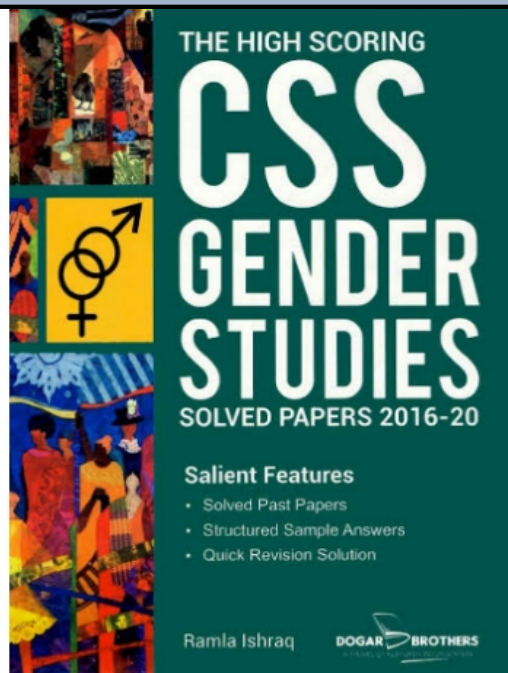
Former British Prime Minister Gordon Brown, UN Special Envoy on Global Education, addressed the World Trade Organisation (WTO) Annual Public Forum, discussing the G20 summit. Brown noted that although the G20 summit, hosted by India, showcased diplomatic success for India, it fell short in addressing critical global economic issues, including concerns about a potential economic slowdown, revealing challenges in coordinating global economic policies. The summit highlighted a deadlock on matters like climate change, AI regulation, debt relief, and famine in Africa. Brown stressed the necessity for a new era of international cooperation and renewed multilateralism to tackle current challenges transcending national borders. He emphasized the importance of globally coordinated action on issues like climate change, pandemics, financial stability, poverty, debt, and famine. Brown pointed out significant geopolitical shifts, such as the transition from a unipolar world, a shift away from neoliberal economics, and the move from hyper-globalization, leading to resurgent nationalism and barriers between nations. He also warned of potential declines in international trade if the world divides into two

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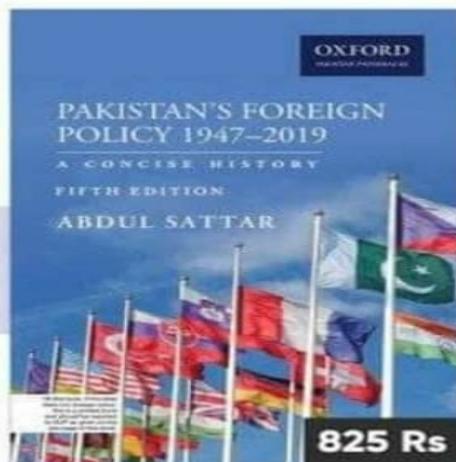
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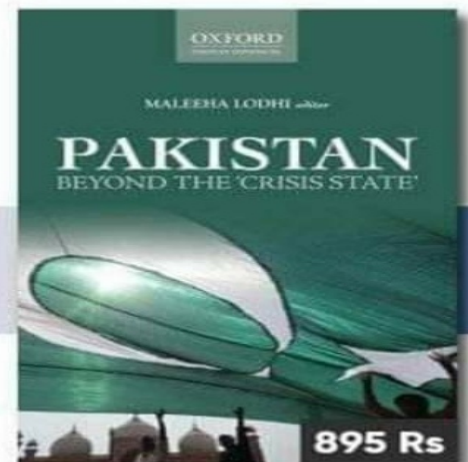
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Governing The Ungovernable



Pakistan's Foreign Policy 1947-2019



Pakistan Beyond The Crisis State

economic blocs, with disproportionate impacts on low-income countries. Despite challenges, Brown expressed hope for cooperation, citing achievements at the 12th Ministerial Conference, including agreements on reducing fisheries subsidies and a 90-country trade in services agreement, while highlighting the need for further work on global supply chains, special treatments, and a functional dispute resolution mechanism within the WTO.



➤ **Xi Jinping and Vladimir Putin's Joint Diplomatic Message at G20**

China's President Xi Jinping's decision to skip the G20 Summit in India is a notable development in global diplomacy, reflecting shifts in global power dynamics. The G20 Summit, which brings together world leaders to discuss pressing global issues, has been a significant platform since its inception in 2008. Xi's absence suggests that China is recalibrating its diplomatic strategy, possibly to exert pressure on its strained relationship with India, partly due to border conflicts, or to align more closely with international groups like BRICS, which aren't as Western-focused as the G20. Meanwhile, India's launch of the India-Middle East-Europe corridor is seen as a move to counter China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), although the corridor's scale and impact may not directly compete with the BRI. Xi's non-attendance also coinciding with Russia's President Putin not attending could indicate unity between China and Russia, influencing their evolving relationship with the United States. The outcome of China's decision regarding the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) summit in San Francisco will be closely watched in the context of the Indo-Pacific region's increasing centrality in global power dynamics. In the grander scheme, China, under Communist Party leadership, is strategically navigating the complexities of international politics to assert its position as a major global player and reshape global dynamics beyond the G20 Summit, potentially rebalancing East and West in international relations.

➤ **The G20 Summit's Message: Contrasting India and Pakistan's Economic Strategies**

The G20 Summit held in New Delhi, saw India's successful hosting of the 18th gathering. The New Delhi Declaration, agreed upon by all participating countries except China and Russia, focuses on promoting global economic cooperation through multilateralism. This philosophy aligns with India's success in forging multilateral relationships that contributed to its economic growth and inclusion in the G20 group. This approach stands in contrast to Pakistan's economic struggles, marked by hyperinflation, mounting external debt, and heavy reliance on loans, indicating a need for Pakistan to reassess its approach to multilateralism and economic stability.

➤ **Contradictions and Potentials**

The G20's ambiguous stance on resolving the Ukraine crisis suggests a lack of consensus, potentially leading to continued conflicts and disruptions affecting nations like Pakistan. Ongoing disagreements between the West and Russia, coupled with the impact of the Russia-Ukraine war on rising oil prices,



may hinder Pakistan's ability to provide immediate fuel price relief. Moscow's success in avoiding Western criticism creates an opportunity for Pakistan to maintain principled neutrality, with nations aligning with individual positions. The India-proposed India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC) raises concerns about India's regional isolation campaign against Pakistan, excluding it from the trade and connectivity framework. IMEC is poised to intensify geo-economic competition with China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI),

prompting Pakistan to analyze its political motives and maintain a principled distance from anti-China undertones. Simultaneously, IMEC's launch provides Pakistan with a reason to advocate for stronger geo-economic connectivity and inclusivity through the planned expansion of the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). Pakistan's crucial role as a natural link between the BRI and IMEC should be actively promoted, emphasizing its ability to extend connectivity benefits to Central Asian countries. An open engagement policy with all nations is encouraged, fostering geo-economic connectivity across various corridors. Intensified diplomatic and economic dialogues, especially with key regions like the African Union (AU), can leverage Pakistan's position as the newest G20 member to advance interests in promoting inclusive economic connectivity within the G20.

➤ **Global Economic Corridors and the Evolving Role of Pakistan in International Diplomacy**

Geopolitics and geo-economics are also at play, with the India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor competing with the Belt and Road Initiative and Russia's International North-South Transport Corridor. Interestingly, despite China's G20 membership, it wasn't invited to participate in the new project connecting India and Europe. This initiative will also facilitate connections between Israel and Arab states. Developing multiple transcontinental energy and trade corridors can be positive as competition can drive growth and investment, benefiting countries involved. Unfortunately, Pakistan is more of a spectator than an active participant in these global networks due to internal issues. Even the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), a Belt and Road Initiative project, hasn't been fully utilized. Pakistan should recognize that despite India's human rights issues in Kashmir, the international community, including Muslim countries, appears less concerned and eager to engage in business with India. Economic interests often take precedence over moral concerns on the global stage. To be part of these global trade networks and have a voice on issues like Kashmir, Pakistan must first address its internal challenges.

➤ **Pakistan's Future Course of Action**

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○ *Pivot Eastward amid Shifting Alliances*

In light of India's evolving alignment with the West and decreasing reliance on Russia, Pakistan can explore diplomatic opportunities in the East. While India and Russia maintain historical ties, recent shifts, such as reduced defense purchases from Russia and a focus on the Indo-Pacific, suggest a changing dynamic. Pakistan can position itself strategically within the Sino-Russian alliance, leveraging geopolitical changes to its advantage.

○ *Embrace Soft Power Development and Regional Corridors*

Following the introduction of new economic corridors at the G20, Pakistan should actively pursue the benefits offered by these trade routes and development programs for South Asia. Rather than viewing them as a counter to China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), Pakistan should seek inclusion in these corridors, utilizing its relationships with Saudi Arabia and the US. This presents an opportunity for Pakistan to shape its foreign policy based on geo-economics.

○ *Advocate for Kashmir and Human Rights*

Pakistan should maintain a consistent voice on the global stage, drawing attention to the human rights violations in Kashmir. Despite concerns that India might use multilateral platforms to downplay the Kashmir conflict, Pakistan should act as a stable force, utilizing international forums to highlight human rights abuses perpetrated by Indian forces since the revocation of Article 370 and 35A on August 6, 2019.

....War of CORRIDORS Getting Serious....

IMEC vs. BRI:

Unveiling the Geoeconomic Chessboard



➤ **The Global Arena of Economic Corridors**

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In the dynamic landscape of global geopolitics, economic corridors have emerged as strategic chess pieces, shaping the intricate moves of nations. At the forefront are two colossal initiatives: China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and the recently introduced India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC). These ambitious projects, conceived against the backdrop of the G20 summit, stand as manifestations of economic prowess, geopolitical maneuvering, and the quest for dominance.

➤ **Shaping the Narrative: IMEC's Genesis and Purpose**

The IMEC, born from collaborative efforts between the USA, India, and their allies, seeks to redefine trade routes between India, the Gulf States, and Europe. Positioned as a mediator between regions, its proclaimed purpose is to enhance the movement of goods, data, money, and foster people-to-people connections. However, the underlying motivations hint at countering China's expansive BRI, as highlighted by the commitment of \$600 billion by G7 leaders to counterbalance China's influence.

➤ **The BRI: A Decade of Transformation**

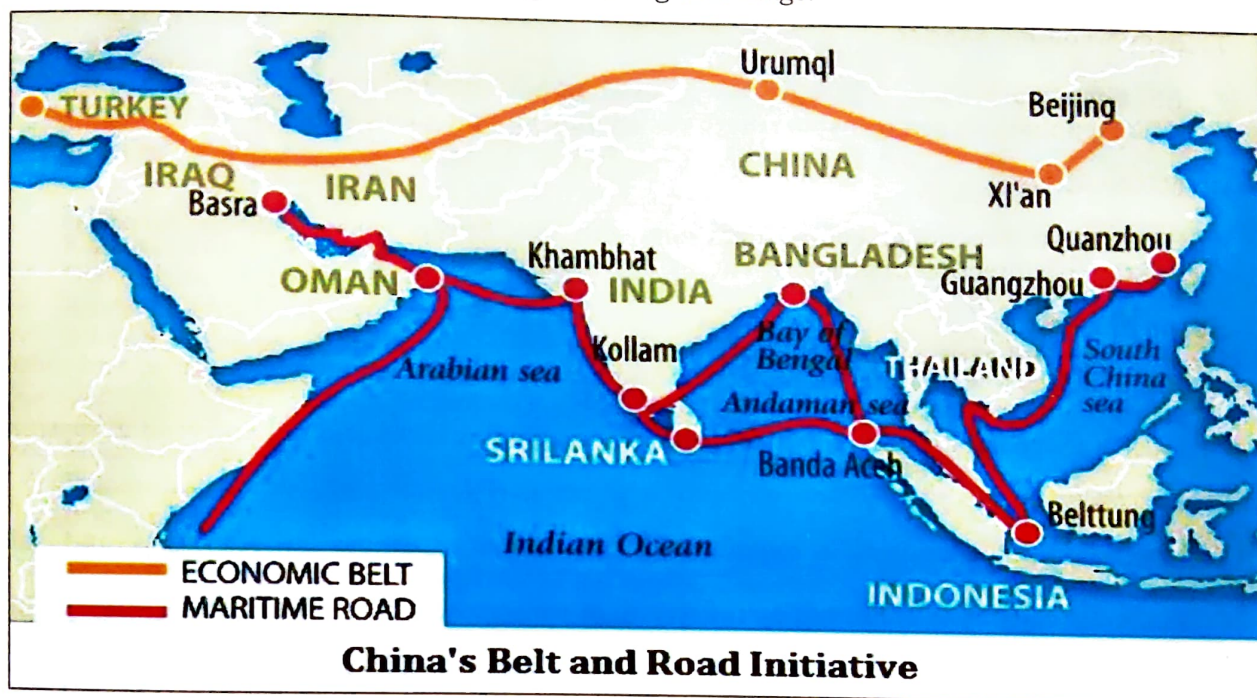
Celebrating its 10th anniversary, China's BRI unfolds as a multi-trillion-dollar global cooperation platform, showcasing over 3,000 cooperation projects and nearly a trillion dollars in investments. Despite criticisms regarding transparency and debt traps, China asserts the BRI's positive impact on global connectivity. The BRI's core emphasis on building extensive networks across Asia, the Middle East, Africa, and Europe signifies a decade-long commitment to fostering international economic cooperation and supporting growth.

➤ Geopolitical Tussle: Clash of Economic Visions

In the broader context of the US-China rivalry, the BRI and IMEC symbolize conflicting interests and visions for economic development. China's BRI, an answer to the world's infrastructure gap, stands in stark contrast to the IMEC's emergence as a response to counterbalance China's growing influence. The geopolitical interplay between these economic trajectories underscores the complexity of global power dynamics and economic interests.

➤ IMEC's Strategic Significance: India's Response to BRI

For India, the IMEC represents a strategic move to counter China's influence and create its economic and strategic corridor. By strengthening trade and investment ties with the Middle East and Europe, India aims to diversify its trade partners, reduce dependence on China, and enhance its global influence. The IMEC, if successfully implemented, could provide India with unique advantages, ranging from energy security to increased political leverage on the global stage.



➤ Regional Dynamics: Pakistan's Crossroads

Pakistan finds itself at the crossroads, potentially benefiting from the IMEEC project. The initiative could create new avenues for trade, investment, and tourism, leveraging Pakistan's existing infrastructure under the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). Integration with IMEEC could be transformative, expanding Pakistan's reach to regional nations and strengthening its position in influential corridors.

➤ Corridor Wars: Unveiling Geoeconomic Motivations

Delving into the corridors' political intricacies, the IMEC emerges as a diplomatic victory for India, strategically backed by the US and its allies. Positioned as a counter to China's BRI, the IMEC reflects a larger narrative of the US attempting to offset China's global influence. The geopolitical chessboard extends to the Middle East, where the US seeks to reassert its role and influence through initiatives like the IMEC.

Fact Sheet ~ Comparative Analysis of BRI & IMEC

In this section, the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and the India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC) are compared across various aspects. The BRI, launched by China in 2013, is well underway, while the IMEC is still in the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) stage. Key points of comparison include initiation and progress, scale of investment, geographical coverage, transportation modes, directionality, and the scope of projects.

○ Initiation and Progress

- ✓ BRI was launched in 2013 and is actively progressing.
- ✓ IMEC is in the MOU stage, indicating it is in preliminary planning.

○ Scale of Investment

- ✓ BRI has an estimated value of around US\$8 trillion.
- ✓ IMEC's investments are projected to be smaller, possibly a few billion dollars.

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○ Geographical Coverage

- ✓ BRI spans approximately 150 countries, primarily developing or emerging economies.
- ✓ IMEC is planned to cover around 20 countries, mainly in the Middle East and Europe, with generally higher economic development.

○ Transportation Modes

- ✓ BRI has a diverse network, with 70% focused on land-based routes.
- ✓ IMEC emphasizes sea transportation, envisioning shipping lanes and rail and road connections.

○ Directionality

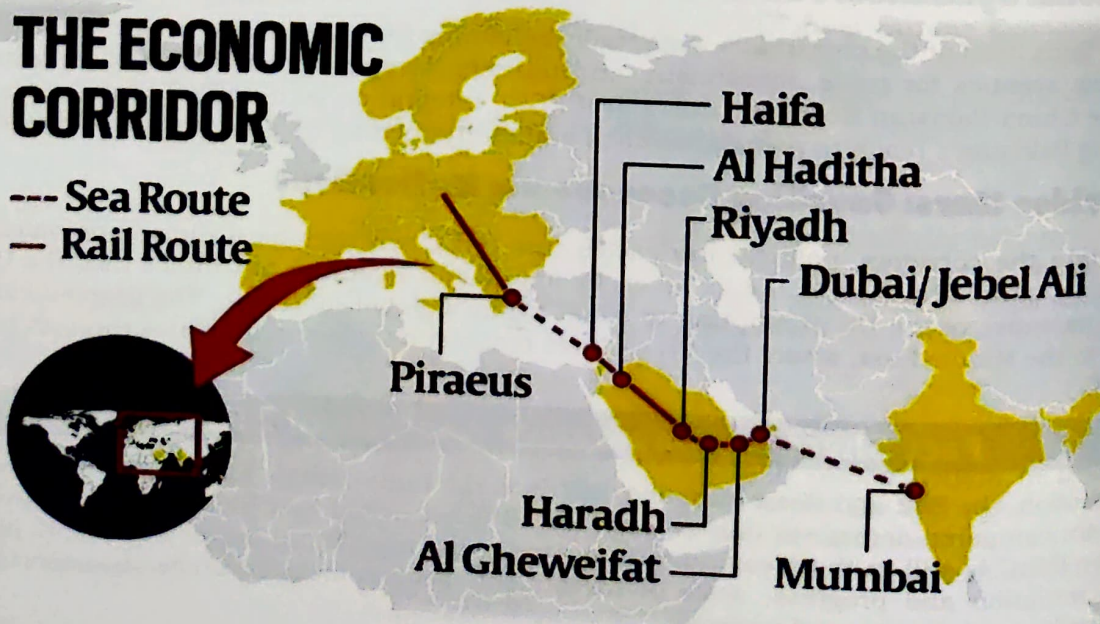
- ✓ BRI is multi-directional, connecting China with Asia, Europe, Africa, and the Americas.
- ✓ IMEC is unidirectional, primarily connecting India to Europe.

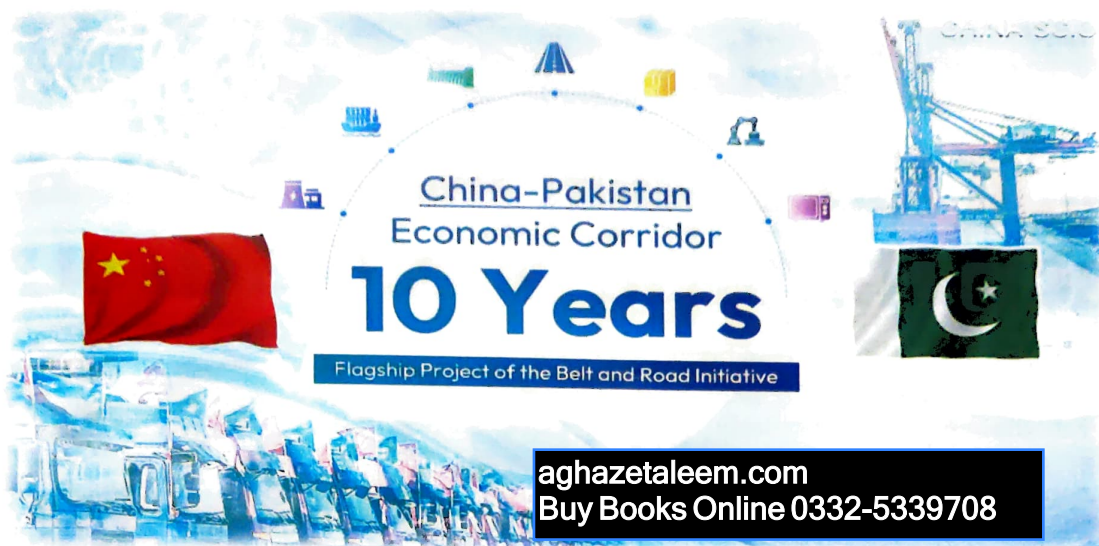
○ Scope of Projects

- ✓ BRI includes a wide range of projects from infrastructure to energy, agriculture, and industrial zones.
- ✓ IMEC's scope appears more limited, focusing on shipping lanes and rail and road infrastructure.

○ Prospects of IMEC

- ✓ IMEC is 90% complete or operational, with advanced stages in sea lanes and railroad connections.
- ✓ Financial viability is enhanced by the wealth of participating countries.
- ✓ Concerns about Chinese dominance drive nations to expedite IMEC's completion.
- ✓ Robust private sector involvement can expedite project implementation.
- ✓ Economic benefits include regional integration and enhanced energy security.





○ Challenges for IMEC

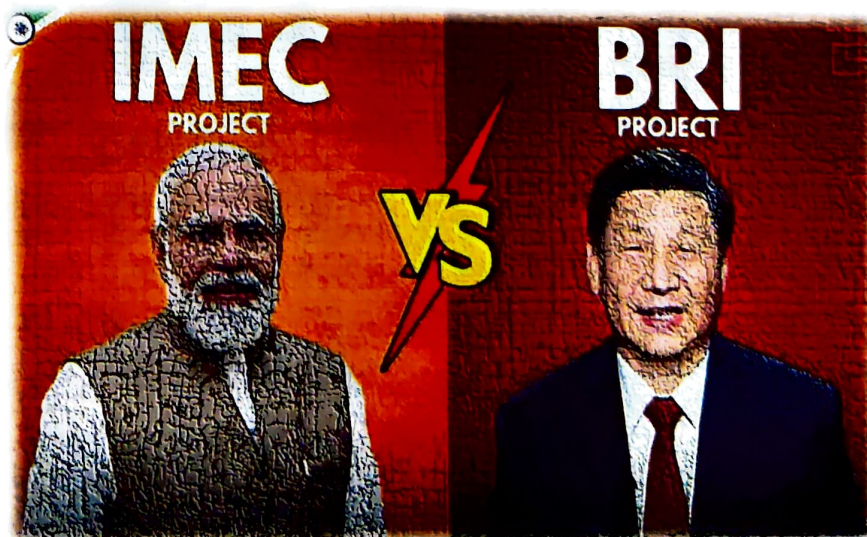
- ✓ Complex coordination among 20 countries poses challenges.
- ✓ Financial hurdles and debt burdens may impact funding and economic viability.
- ✓ Geopolitical and security concerns in the Middle East could disrupt operations.
- ✓ Environmental and regulatory issues need to be addressed.
- ✓ Infrastructure gaps and technological integration across borders are challenges.

○ Challenges to Pakistan's Geopolitical Significance from IMEC

- ✓ Misconceptions about IMEC's scale compared to BRI, especially CPEC.
- ✓ Pakistan's unique geopolitical location and strategic importance in regional trade remain unchanged.
- ✓ IMEC's dependence on Pakistan underscores its ongoing geopolitical relevance.
- ✓ Geopolitical realities, including the India-Pakistan rivalry, highlight the importance of regional stability.

➤ Conclusion: Navigating the Future of Economic Corridors

As nations maneuver their pieces on the geoeconomic chessboard, the future of economic corridors remains uncertain. The clash between IMEC and BRI signifies more than just infrastructure development; it represents a struggle for global influence. The complexities of regional dynamics, strategic interests, and diplomatic manoeuvring will shape the narrative of economic corridors, influencing the trajectory of nations in the years to come. BRI and IMEC represent distinct approaches, with BRI having a larger scale and global impact.



In addition, IMEC offers economic benefits and connectivity but is still in early stages. Pakistan's geopolitical significance remains intact despite the emergence of new projects like IMEC. On that front, collaboration with Pakistan is crucial for the success of regional connectivity initiatives.

.. India MODI-fied ~ Threat to Global Multilateralism ..

Indian Nationalist Internationalism: DECONSTRUCTING INDIAN REALPOLITIK

India proudly celebrated its 18th G-20 Summit as a historic achievement in multilateral diplomacy, particularly for brokering consensus on the Russo-Ukraine conflict. The release of the joint declaration, "G20 New Delhi Leaders' Declaration," required intensive efforts and extensive negotiations, reflecting India's diplomatic prowess.

o Diplomatic Applause: Global Recognition of India's Efforts

India's success in garnering consensus received global acclaim. China appreciated New Delhi for sending positive signals through the Joint Declaration, while Russia declared it a diplomatic win due to the absence of any mention of Russia as an aggressor. Western leaders, including the UK Prime Minister and the White House National Security Adviser, lauded India's stance against the use of force in territorial acquisition, recognizing India's diplomatic efforts.

o Evaluating Indian Achievements: G-20 Summit in the Context of Global Power Dynamics

The 18th G-20 Summit occurred against the backdrop of intensified major power rivalries, dividing the world into China-Russia and U.S.-led Western blocs. India, as the G-20 chair, faced the challenge of navigating through this complex geopolitical landscape.

o Optics vs. Substance: BJP's Political Agenda in Hosting G20

India's focus on optics rather than substantive long-term objectives during its G20 Presidency raises questions about the Bharatiya Janata Party's (BJP) political agenda. By hosting the summit, BJP aimed to use it as a political asset for the upcoming Lok Sabha elections, emphasizing a Hindu nationalist outlook and renaming the event as "Bharat Moment."

o Global South Leadership: India's Attempt to Lead and Unresolved Issues

India aimed to assert leadership in the Global South by working with countries like Indonesia, Brazil, and South Africa. However, the lack of substantive action on critical issues, such as the Ukraine conflict and climate change, suggests that India failed to effectively represent and lead the Global South.



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Joint Declaration Dynamics: Navigating Disagreements and Red Lines

The release of the Joint Declaration showcased India's diplomatic challenge in navigating disagreements among member states. The Ukraine conflict, a major point of contention, highlighted the difficulties faced by India in balancing the demands of the U.S.-led Western bloc and China-Russia alliances.

Sino-India Rivalry: Xi's Absence and Economic Corridor Dynamics

The absence of Chinese President Xi Jinping from the G-20 Summit indicates growing Sino-India rivalry. India's support for the India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC) reflects its attempt to counter China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) while navigating delicate diplomatic relationships with both the West and China.

Diplomatic Rows: India's Approach to Differences with Canada and China

India's handling of diplomatic rows with Canada and China reveals its modus operandi in dealing with differences. Snubbing leaders and resorting to pressure tactics rather than meaningful dialogue may hinder India's ability to address disputes effectively.

Conclusion: G-20 Summit's Impact on India's Global Positioning

While claims of a diplomatic triumph surround India's G-20 Presidency, compromises on critical global issues and a lack of long-term strategic vision suggest a more nuanced assessment. India's exclusive foreign policy approach driven by Hindutva ideology raises questions about its ability to navigate complex global dynamics effectively. As India aspires to create its sphere of influence, the challenges of balancing regional and global interests become increasingly apparent.

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Hypocrisy ~ Double Standards ~ Deception

The Palestinian Conflict:

A Story of Western Double Standards



The fighting between Israel and Palestine started again on October 7th when Hamas unexpectedly attacked Israel. In response, Israel launched air attacks and blocked off the Gaza Strip, a place in Palestine controlled by Hamas. This conflict has been going on for a long time, and it's causing a lot of harm. Here is an overview of this all and how it began.

○ Exodus 1947: A Turning Point in the Israel-Palestine Conflict

Many Jewish people from Europe, including some who survived the Holocaust, get on a ship called Exodus 1947 to go to Palestine, which was controlled by the British at the time. They hope to live in the "promised land." But British naval ships stop them and send them back to Europe. This event gets a lot of attention from the media and makes many people around the world very upset. It pushes the UK to think that a solution for the Palestine problem, with the help of the United Nations (UN), is needed. A special group from the UN suggests a plan. It says that 56.47 percent of Palestine should be for a Jewish state, and 44.53 percent should be for an Arab state. The Palestinian leaders don't agree with this plan, but the Jewish leaders do. On November 29, 1947 the United Nations (UN) General Assembly says yes to the plan. Thirty-three countries vote to split the area, 13 countries say no, and 10 countries choose not to vote either way.

○ 1948-49-The Birth of Israel and the Nakba: A Turning Point in History

On May 14, 1948 Israel's first Prime Minister, David Ben-Gurion, tells everyone that they're starting their own country. This happens just before the British rule in Palestine is supposed to end. The United

Nations (UN) says that Israel gets 77 percent of the land in Palestine. For Palestinians, this day was a very sad one. It was called the "Nakba," which means a big disaster. Many Palestinians had to leave their homes because they heard about attacks happening in places like Dir Yassin. They went to Egypt, Lebanon, and Jordan. At the same time, armies from Egypt, Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, and Iraq attacked Israel. This started a war called the 1948 Arab-Israeli War. In the end, the Arab armies were pushed back, and there was a break from fighting. New borders were drawn, and they were better for Israel. Jordan took control of the West Bank and East Jerusalem, and Egypt took control of the Gaza Strip.

○ 1956-The Suez Crisis: A War and Withdrawal

The Second Arab-Israeli War, also known as the Suez Crisis, occurred because Egypt took control of the Suez Canal. In response, Israel, the United Kingdom, and France teamed up. Israel entered the Gaza Strip and the Sinai Peninsula. Later on, the United States and the Soviet Union, another big country, pressured Israel to withdraw its soldiers from those places, so they did.

○ 1959-The Emergence of Fatah and its Role in the PLO

Yasser Arafat created a group called Fatah in Gaza and Kuwait. Later, this group became a significant part of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO).

○ 1967-The Six-Day War: Transforming the Middle East Map

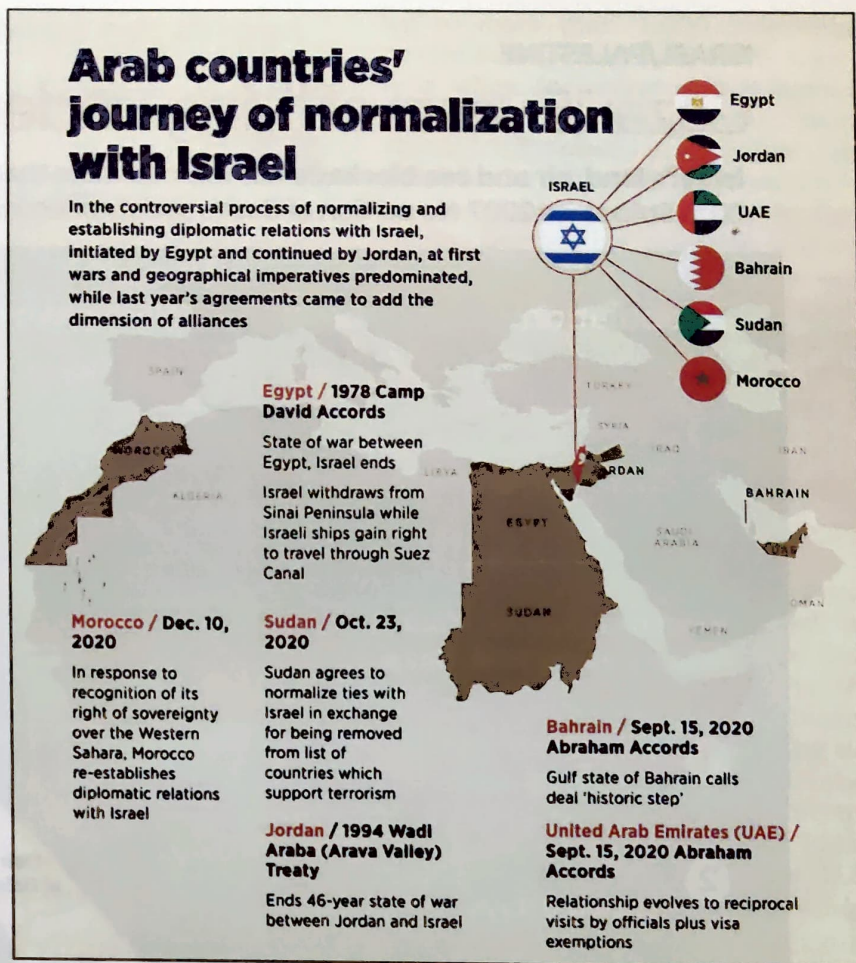
In the Third Arab-Israeli War, also known as the Six-Day War, Israel fought against its Arab neighbors. This war brought about significant changes in the Middle East map. Israel took control of the West Bank, East Jerusalem, the Gaza Strip, the Sinai Peninsula, and the Golan Heights.

○ 1973-The Yom Kippur War: A Hard-Fought Battle

On October 6, 1973, which was the Jewish holiday of Yom Kippur, Egyptian and Syrian armies attacked Israel, starting a new war in the region. It was called the Yom Kippur War. The war lasted for 19 days, and in the end, Israel pushed back the armies from the Arab countries. But, sadly, a lot of people from all sides, thousands of them, lost their lives.

○ 1979-The Historic Israel-Egypt Peace Agreement

An agreement for peace between Israel and Egypt was made in Washington. It followed the Camp David Accords, which were signed in 1978 by the leader of Egypt, Anwar Sadat, and the leader of Israel, Menachem Begin. As part of this agreement, Egypt got back the Sinai Peninsula, which they had lost during the Six-Day War. This was also the first time an Arab leader officially recognized the State of Israel.



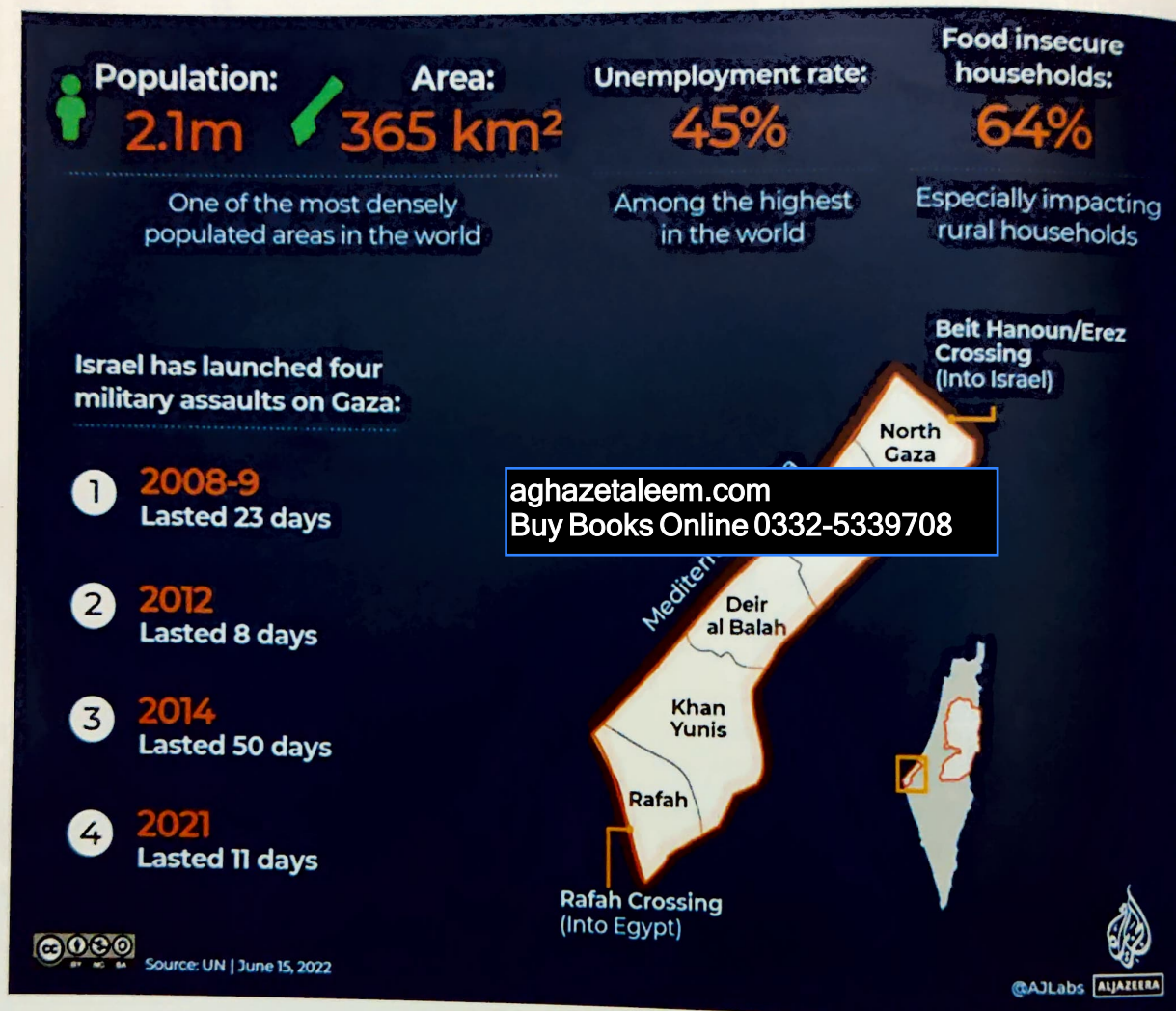
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ISRAEL/PALESTINE

Gaza: 15 years of living under blockade

Israel's land, air and sea blockade has trapped more than two million people inside the Gaza Strip since 2007. No portion of Gaza's society or economy has been left untouched.



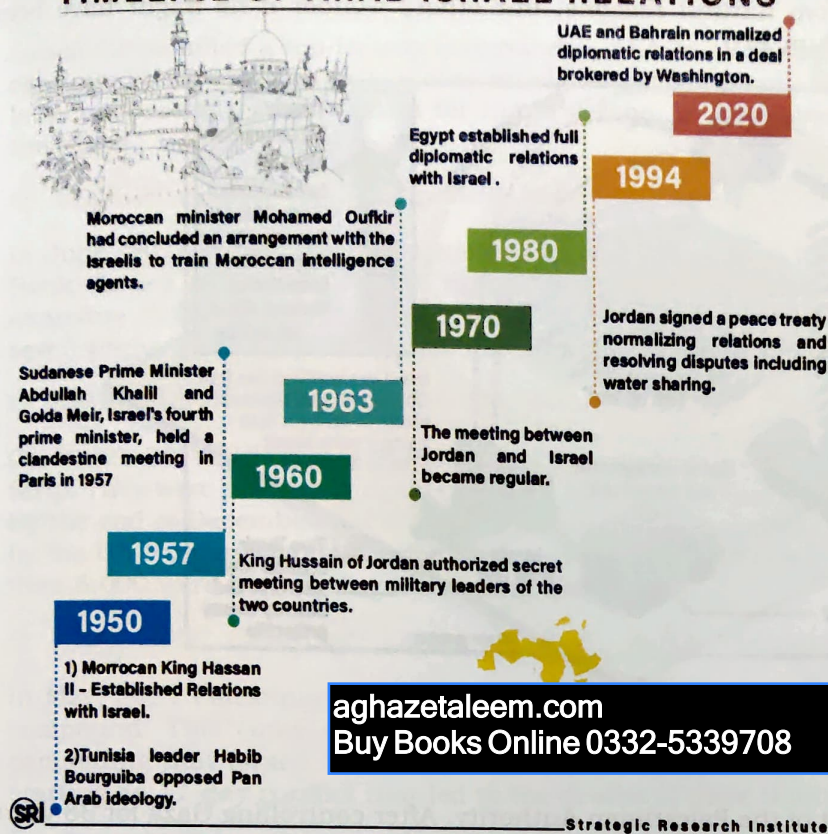
○ 1982-Ariel Sharon's Lebanon Incursion and the Sabra and Shatilla Tragedy

Israeli soldiers, led by Defense Minister Ariel Sharon, entered Lebanon in a mission called "Operation Peace of Galilee." Their aim was to eliminate Palestinian guerrilla bases in southern Lebanon. However, the Israeli troops advanced all the way to the capital of Lebanon, Beirut. Following this, the PLO, under Arafat's leadership, was compelled to leave. This left the Palestinian refugee camps in Lebanon with minimal protection. Between September 16 and 18, a group of Lebanese Christian fighters, who had connections to Israel, entered the Sabra and Shatilla camps in Beirut. The events that unfolded there were extremely brutal and deeply shocked the global community. The international community expressed strong dismay. An Israeli commission known as the Kahane Commission investigated the events, leading to Ariel Sharon losing his position as defense minister.

○ 1987-The First Palestinian Intifada: The Uprising of Stones

Protests began in Palestinian refugee camps in Gaza and then spread to the West Bank. This marked the beginning of the First Palestinian Intifada, which means "uprising" in Arabic. People often call it the "war of stones" because it involved a lot of stone-throwing. The First Intifada continued until 1993 and

TIMELINE OF ARAB ISRAEL RELATIONS



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led to more than 1,000 Palestinian people losing their lives. This was a time when the world saw images of Palestinian demonstrators using stones to stand up against the powerful Israeli military. It became a symbol of the Palestinian fight for their rights. During this uprising, a group called Hamas was formed. They were influenced by the ideas of Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood. Right from the start, this group believed in using force and didn't accept the idea of Israel as a legitimate state.

○ 1993-The Oslo Accords: A Historic Handshake for Peace

Yasser Arafat and Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin signed an important agreement called the Oslo Accords. This agreement led to the creation of the Palestinian Authority, which was in charge of governing the West Bank and Gaza. On September 13, there was a big moment at the White House when Arafat and Rabin shook hands in front of the U.S.

President, Bill Clinton. This event was seen by more than 400 million people on TV all around the world.

○ 1995-The Assassination of Yitzhak Rabin

On November 4, 1995 Rabin was killed by a person who believed strongly in right-wing ideas and was also Jewish. This happened during a peace event in Tel Aviv.

○ 1995-Benjamin Netanyahu's First Term as Prime Minister

Benjamin Netanyahu became the prime minister for the first time through an election.

○ 2000-Sharon's Visit and the Second Intifada

In September 2000, Sharon, who was the leader of a right-wing party called Likud, visited a place in Jerusalem called Al-Aqsa/Temple Mount. This made the Palestinians very upset, and it led to the Second Intifada, also known as the Al-Aqsa Intifada. It continued until 2005, and during that time, about 3,000 Palestinians and 1,000 Israelis lost their lives over five years.

In 2001, Sharon became the prime minister of Israel. He stopped talking to Arafat and kept him in a place called Ramallah.

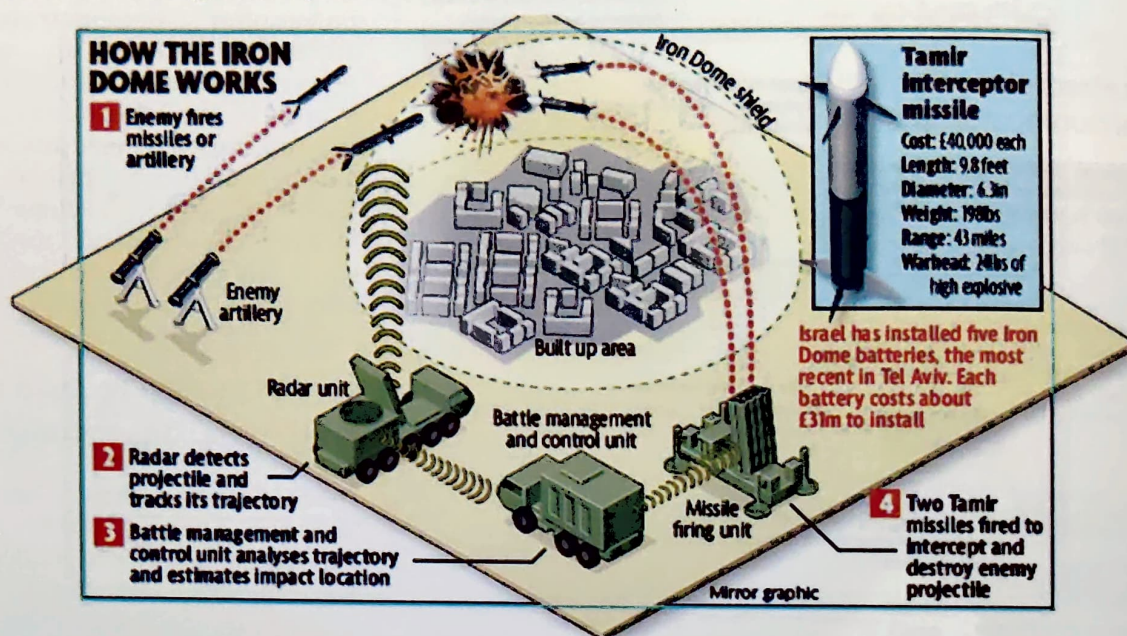
○ 2002-Turning Points: Israel's Separation Wall and UN Talks

The Israeli government began building a big wall to keep Israel separate from the West Bank. For the first time, the United Nations Security Council talked about both Israel and Palestine existing together as separate countries. The Israeli army ended the blockade in Ramallah.

○ 2004-Controversy Surrounding the Deaths of Sheikh Ahmed Yassin and Yasser Arafat

On March 22, 2004, Sheikh Ahmed Yassin, who was a co-founder of Hamas and couldn't walk, was killed in a helicopter attack by Israel. Eight months later, on November 11, 2004 PLO chairman Arafat

passed away in a hospital in Paris after being sick for a long time. Arafat's death has been talked about a lot. Some experts think he died from natural reasons, but others wonder if he might have been poisoned with something called polonium 210.



○ 2005-A New Leader and Israel's Withdrawal from Gaza

Mahmoud Abbas became the president of the Palestinian Authority. After controlling Gaza for 38 years, Israel withdrew from the area.

○ 2006- Challenges and Changes in the Middle East

On January 4, 2006, Prime Minister Sharon had a stroke and went into a coma, which he stayed in until he passed away in 2014. After that, Ehud Olmert became the prime minister and the leader of Sharon's new centrist party, Kadima. During this time, Hamas won the legislative elections in the Palestinian Territories. This caused the United States and the European Union to stop giving direct help to the Palestinian government. In addition, a Lebanese group called Hezbollah, which follows Islamic ideas, launched rocket attacks on Israel and captured two Israeli soldiers. Israel responded with a strong military action, and many people, mostly from Lebanon, lost their lives. Many people in Israel saw this war as not successful, and they started asking Olmert to step down from his position.

○ 2007- Hamas Took Control of Gaza

After many months of fighting between Hamas and Fatah forces, Hamas took control of Gaza.

○ 2008-Conflict Erupts in Gaza: A UN Report on War Crimes

On December 27, 2008, the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) started a sudden attack on Gaza, and in just one day, more than 200 people lost their lives. Soon after, the IDF began a ground invasion of Gaza that lasted for two weeks. A report from the United Nations later said that both Israel and Hamas did things that are considered war crimes during this fighting.

○ 2009-Ceasefire Declared: The End of a 22-Day Battle

On January 18, 2009, Israel and Hamas separately said they would stop fighting, putting an end to the 22-day battle. During this time, more than 1,300 Palestinians and 13 Israelis had lost their lives.

○ 2011-Israel's Iron Dome: Defending Against Rockets

On March 27, 2011 Israel had set up a missile defense system called Iron Dome. This system helped them stop short-range rockets that were often launched from Gaza.

o Escalation of Violence: The Conflict in November 2012

Israeli forces killed a top Hamas commander, Ahmed al-Jaabari, in an airstrike on November 14. They continued with more airstrikes over an eight-day campaign. During this time, Hamas fought back by launching rockets at Jerusalem for the first time. In total, over 130 Palestinians and five Israelis lost their lives.

o Escalation in Gaza: The Summer Conflict of 2014

In June, 2014 three Israeli teenagers were kidnapped and killed near the city of Hebron in the West Bank. Israeli officials said that Hamas was responsible for this, and on July 8, they began many airstrikes in Gaza. This led to a back-and-forth of rockets being fired between Israel and Hamas over seven weeks. Because of the Israeli missile strikes, more than 2,200 Palestinians in Gaza lost their lives.

o Gaza Border Protests: A Look Back at 2018

On March 30, 2018 tens of thousands of Palestinians gathered near the border with Israel in the Gaza Strip. They were protesting against Israel's blockade of Gaza. These protests went on for several months. By the end of December 2018, the Independent International Commission of Inquiry, which was set up by the UN Human Rights Council, reported that at least 189 Palestinians had lost their lives, and more than 6,000 were hurt during these demonstrations.

o May 2021 Conflict: Tensions at Al-Aqsa Mosque

In May, 2021 Palestinian worshippers had conflicts with Israeli police at Jerusalem's Al-Aqsa Mosque compound. This came after weeks of growing tension. Hamas then fired many rockets into Israel, demanding that Israeli forces leave the compound. In response, Israel carried out airstrikes in Gaza, starting an 11-day conflict that led to the deaths of more than 200 people.

o August 2022 Gaza Airstrikes and Rocket Attacks

On August 5, 2022 Israel launched many airstrikes on Gaza, and they killed a senior member of the Islamic Jihad group. This caused the Palestinians in Gaza to fire rockets in response. Over the next three days of fighting, at least 40 Palestinians lost their lives.

o 2023-Israeli Forces Clash with Palestinian Militants in the West Bank and Hamas Launches a Bold Attack on Israel in Gaza

On January 26, 2023 Israeli forces had a raid in a tense town in the West Bank. They ended up killing nine members of the Palestinian Islamic Jihad group and some other people who weren't involved. In response, Palestinian fighters fired two rockets, which led to Israel striking back. Fortunately, there were no more reports of people getting hurt. Then, on October 7, 2023 something big happened. Hamas did a major surprise attack on Israel, which had never been done this way before. Hamas fighters managed to get into Gaza, even though the border was very well protected, using different ways like by air, land, and sea. Israel reacted with airstrikes on Gaza and sent more troops to the border.



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In the heart of the Middle East, the land of Palestine once again finds itself in the grip of a devastating conflict that has left communities shattered and lives in ruins. The recent escalation of violence, initiated by a targeted attack from a Palestinian group ruling Gaza, has plunged the region into an abyss of despair. The toll has been horrifying, with thousands lives lost and thousands of individuals injured, further deepening the wounds of an already conflicted land. The subsequent air strikes, claiming the lives of thousands of Palestinians, have left the region teetering on the edge of a full-scale ground invasion. Amidst this chaos, hostages, including soldiers, civilians, children, and the elderly, have been taken, deepening the humanitarian crisis. Vital infrastructure, housing, tunnels, mosques, and even homes of Hamas officials have been ruthlessly targeted, leaving entire communities in despair and displacement. In this grim reality, the international community must rise to the occasion and take decisive action. The indiscriminate violence against civilians and the destruction of essential infrastructure are clear violations of human rights and international law. Urgent intervention is needed to protect the lives of innocent people and ensure their safety. The cycle of violence must be broken, and lasting peace must be established in the region. At the heart of this conflict lies a fundamental need for justice and dialogue. The Palestinian people, like all others, deserve to live without fear, to raise

their families in peace, and to have the opportunity for a prosperous future. The international community must pressure both sides to engage in meaningful negotiations, address the root causes of the conflict, and work towards a just and lasting solution. World leaders, diplomats, and humanitarian organizations must come together to facilitate dialogue and broker a comprehensive peace agreement. This agreement must address the legitimate concerns and aspirations of both Israelis and Palestinians, ensuring a fair resolution that paves the way for coexistence and mutual respect. The tragedy unfolding in Palestine demands the urgent attention of the world. The international community cannot afford to remain silent in the face of such immense human suffering. It is our collective responsibility to stand up against injustice, advocate for peace, and work tirelessly towards a resolution that brings lasting stability to the region. Only through genuine dialogue, understanding, and cooperation can we hope to build a future where Palestinians and Israelis alike can live in peace and harmony.

➤ **Hamas Challenging Israel**

“Operation al-Aqsa Storm,” is a historic event as it marked the first direct conflict within Israel’s boundaries since the 1948 Arab-Israeli War. What made this offensive particularly stunning was not only its surprise factor but also the fact that it caught not only Israelis, known for their world-class, well-equipped, and highly efficient surveillance and intelligence systems, off guard but also the entire world. The Israeli-Palestinian conflict is closely monitored due to its potential to disrupt peace in the Middle East, a region crucial for global oil supply. The fear of oil supply disruption and its potential to drive up oil prices, thus impacting economies worldwide, especially vulnerable ones like Pakistan, added an extra layer of concern to this already volatile situation. The audacious and deadly manoeuvre executed by Hamas has also raised questions about the effectiveness of Mossad, Israel’s renowned intelligence agency, which is traditionally considered one of the world’s most formidable agencies, specializing in counterterrorism, covert operations, and intelligence collection. Often compared to counterparts like the CIA (United States), MI6 (United Kingdom), and FSB (Russia), Mossad’s inability to anticipate and prevent the surprise attack by Hamas was a notable surprise not only for Israel but also for other global intelligence agencies with a significant presence in the conflict-prone Middle East. This unprecedented military manoeuvre involved a clever transformation of civilian machinery such as bulldozers, hang gliders, and motorbikes, effectively challenging the Middle East’s most potent army. It marked a significant breach in Israel’s defences, the most serious since the Arab-Israeli conflicts of 1973. Hamas achieved this through two years of strategic subterfuge, concealing its military plans and convincing Israel that it had no intention of engaging in a major confrontation.

➤ **The Attack That Caught Israel off Guard**

While Israel believed it was pacifying a war-weary Hamas through economic incentives for Gazan workers, the group was covertly and effectively preparing its fighters. This preparation took place in plain sight but under the guise of not being ready for a conflict. Hamas employed unconventional and untraceable intelligence tactics, leading Israel to underestimate its strength and resilience. The result was a shocking and sudden assault that caught Israel off guard, resulting in more than one thousand Israeli casualties and dozens of abductions. Major Nir Dinar, spokesperson for the Israeli Defense Forces, described this surprise move as “Israeli 9/11,” admitting that they had been caught completely unaware. In the lead-up to this audacious manoeuvre, Hamas constructed a mock Israeli settlement in Gaza for training purposes. Even many Hamas leaders were kept in the dark about the exact plans, and the 1,000 fighters involved had no clear understanding of the exercises’ true purpose. The operation was divided into four parts: an initial barrage of 3,000 rockets fired from Gaza, simultaneous incursions by fighters using hang gliders and motorized paragliders, the securing of terrain by ground troops, and the breach of fortified barriers using explosives and motorbikes. Bulldozers were employed to widen gaps, and commando units attacked key Israeli military installations, disrupting communications. The final phase involved moving hostages to Gaza, a task largely achieved early in the attack. One such high-profile hostage-taking incident occurred during a raid on party-goers near Gaza, with social media footage capturing the chaos as people fled the scene amid gunshots. Hamas’ remarkable ability to

ISRAEL-PALESTINE WAR
Journalists killed since October 7

 **55 Palestinians**

Abdallah Darwish

Muntaser al-Sawaf

Amal Zahed

Mustafa Bakir

Muhammad Moin Ayyash

Mohamad Nabil al-Zaq

Assem al-Barsh

Ayat Khadura

Alaa Taher al-Hassanat

Abdelhalim Awad

Bilal Jadallah

Sari Mansour

Hassouneh Salim

Mostafa al-Sawaf

Amro Salah Abu Hayah

Mossab Ashour

Ahmed Fatima

Yaacoub al-Barsh

Ahmed al-Qara

Yahya Abu Manih

Mohammad Abu Hasira

Mohamed al-Jaja

Mohammed Abu Hatab

Mohammed Bayyari

Majd Fadl Arandas

Iyad Matar

Imad al-Wahidi

Majed Kashko

Nazmi al-Nadim

Yasser Abu Namous

Duaa Sharaf

Jamal al-Faqawi

Salema Mukhaimar

Saed al-Halabi

Ahmed Abu Mahadi

Mohammed Imad Labad

Roshdi Sarraj

Mohammed Ali

Khalil Abu Aathra

Sameeh al-Nady

Mohammed Balousha

Issam Bhar

Abdulhadi Habib

Yousef Maher Dawas

Salam Merna

Husam Mubarak

Ahmed Shehab

Mohamed Fayez Abu Matar

Saeed al-Taweel

Mohammed Sobh

Hisham Alnwajha

Assaad Shamlakh

Mohammad al-Salhi

Mohammad Jarghoun

Ibrahim Mohammad Lafi

 **4 Israelis**

Roei Idan

Shai Regev

Ayelet Arnin

Yaniv Zohar

 **3 Lebanese**

Farah Omar

Rabih al-Maamari

Issam Abdallah

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maintain the secrecy of its unconventional warfare capabilities until it decisively unveiled them and the biggest blow to the invincibility of Israel. The speed, precision, and serenity with which Hamas militants breached the Gaza-Israel barrier, penetrated the Gaza border crossings into Israeli settlements and military installations, and launched over 5,000 rockets into Israel within just 20 minutes were indeed remarkable.

➤ Motivations behind Hamas' 'Operation Al-Aqsa Storm': A Complex Perspective

The Hamas' "Operation Al-Aqsa Storm," can be attributed to several factors. Firstly, it highlights Hamas' perception of Israeli actions as desecration of the holy Islamic site, the Al-Aqsa Mosque. Additionally, the increasing trend of Arab states normalizing relations with Israel, as exemplified by the 2020 Abraham Accords involving the UAE, Bahrain, Sudan, and Morocco. This trend is a cause for concern among Palestinians, as it reduces pressure on Israel to settle with them and signals a prioritization of peace with Arab states over peace with the Palestinians. Hamas, while not recognizing Israel, has indicated it would observe a truce if Israel withdrew to its 1967 borders, but scepticism remains about Israel's willingness to do so, especially if Saudi Arabia were to conclude its deal with Israel. Furthermore, the timing of the attack is significant as it coincides with the 50th anniversary of the Yom Kippur or Ramadan War in 1973, potentially symbolizing the aspiration of surprising Israel, as Egypt and Syria did back then. The trajectory of the conflict remains uncertain. There are concerns about Hezbollah's involvement in Lebanon, depending on Iran's stance, and the potential for Palestinian militants in the West Bank to launch their attacks, creating a third front against Israel. Moreover, there is the possibility of attacks on Jewish Israelis by Arab Israelis living in Israel, leading to a fourth front.



➤ Israel's Brutal Response to Unprecedented Attack by Hamas

The Israeli response to this unprecedented attack on Israeli Soil is surely going to be robust, devastating and exemplary. The Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu warned Israelis to brace themselves for a long and difficult war on Sunday (8th October). It responded with huge strikes on cities in the blockaded Gaza Strip, destroying dozens of buildings. The Israeli military said it had called up an unprecedented 300,000 reservists and was imposing a total blockade of the Gaza Strip, signs it could be planning a ground assault there to defeat Hamas after it launched a humiliating attack. In a further signal of Israel's rapid shift onto a war footing, a cabinet member from Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's Likud Party said it could set up a national unity government joined by opposition leaders within hours.

➤ 'Operation Al-Aqsa Storm': Potential Impacts



The recent assault has led to a significant and devastating impact on both sides, with no clear resolution in sight. President Joe Biden has pledged support for Israel, indicating that Israel is likely to face these challenges with strong backing. However, Israeli actions in Gaza may be constrained by the fact that some Israeli citizens have been kidnapped by Hamas militants and taken to Gaza. The conflict has the potential to impact global markets and economies in several ways. One significant concern is the potential for disruptions in oil prices and supply chains, which can have far-reaching consequences. The Middle East is a critical region for oil production, and any instability in the area can lead to increased

oil prices, affecting not only energy costs but also the global economy. Moreover, the conflict's disruption of supply chains and movement of essential commodities can exacerbate global supply shortages and inflationary pressures. As transportation routes are affected and infrastructure is damaged, the flow of goods can be impeded, leading to delays and increased costs for essential products. This, in turn, can lead to rising commodity prices, making necessities more expensive for consumers around the world. Weak economies, like Pakistan and others in the region, may face additional challenges as they grapple with the impact of higher oil prices and disruptions in the supply chain. These countries may experience increased costs for imports, which can strain their already fragile economic situations and potentially lead to balance of payments issues and inflation. This conflict once started is not going to go down any time soon. For Israel, going full-scale against Hamas will be an uphill task as indiscriminate Israeli bombing would put the lives of the Palestinians mostly civilians at greater risk creating a worldwide reaction against civilian killings. Balancing a robust response with concerns about international opinion remains a challenge for Israel, though Western governments have largely expressed support for Israel in the current conflict. Ultimately, this situation underscores the need for Israel to develop a comprehensive policy to manage the possible opening of war fronts with Hamas, AlFatah, Hezbollah and its citizens of Arab origin. While Hamas justifies its attacks by citing the 16-year blockade of Gaza and Israeli crackdowns in the West Bank, Israel and Western countries have condemned the mass killing of civilians. The situation has jeopardized efforts to normalize relations between Israel and Saudi Arabia, which could have had implications for Palestinian aspirations and Iran's influence in the region. As the conflict continues, there are growing questions about Israel's intelligence failures and the fate of Israeli hostages, further complicating the path to a resolution.

➤ Ongoing Conflicts-Question of Israel Normalization of ties with Arab World

The Israel-Palestinian conflict is intensifying rapidly in the wake of recent attacks by Hamas, reversing recent progress on the diplomatic front in the prospect of Israeli normalization with the Arab world. However, Israel's response from here on out must be calculated carefully. Israel is pursuing a collective punishment against all civilians in Gaza which is a very critical issue. Distinguishing between Hamas and civilians in Gaza was a must. Gaza is one of the most densely populated places on earth, with almost two million people living in an area of around 140 square miles. Moreover, the humanitarian situation in Gaza was already in a dire state prior to the outbreak of new hostilities, making the latest deterioration all the more alarming, as recently warned by United Nations Secretary General Antonio Guterres. Israel has cut off electricity, water and energy supplies to Gaza, killed and displaced the civilian residents. The

emotional impact on the Arab world must be considered. The ramifications of this conflict could extend beyond the political realm, as it deeply affects the hearts and minds of people across the Arab and Muslim nations, generating resentment against Israel and a sense of helplessness in being able to help fellow Arabs in Gaza. Furthermore, the conflict will further unite the Arab world in solidarity with the Palestinians, their Muslim brethren, in the face of what is perceived as indiscriminate Israeli aggression against civilians. This emotional connection across the Arab world strengthens support for Palestine and increases pressure on governments to act, both diplomatically and materially. And it's likely to be more powerful than previous waves in the conflict, as nowadays posts and videos on social media fuel the Arab population's public opinion, as reflected in eruptions of pro-Palestinian protests across Arab states as well as Muslim communities in the West, for example

in Turkey, Jordan, Egypt, Iraq, France, the UK, and Canada among other countries. In more tangible terms, the threat stems from the opportunity that is thus afforded to extremists and radical groups to exploit the Arab street and recruit and radicalize sympathizers. In this respect, it is extremely dangerous to view the Israel-Hamas conflict as a religious war, as stated by Republican US Senator Lindsey Graham. Should the crisis be viewed in such manner, this has the totally unwelcome potential to strain relations between Arab nations and other countries, as well as give extremists and radical groups the opportunity to perpetuate a cycle of violence leading to impeding progress towards a much-needed peaceful resolution between Israel and Palestine as well as between Israel and the broader Middle East.

The persistent and unresolved violence between Hamas and Israel generates fear and anxiety across the Arab world. The fear of potential spillover effects, including increased regional instability or the disruption of peace agreements, can be overwhelming. The long-lasting consequences of the ongoing conflict and continuously inflamed sentiments are important to consider. Israel itself is surrounded by Syria and Lebanon, both of which have armed militias that are very well supported by Iran and can get involved in the conflict scene at any moment at Iran's request, further destabilizing the region.

➤ Recent Crisis – Impacts on KSA-Iran Relations – Question of Saudi-Israel Normalization

Despite their longstanding animosities, KSA Crown Prince Mohamed Bin Salman and Iran's President Ibrahim Raisi had their first call ever since the China-brokered peace agreement in March 2023 to discuss the situation in Gaza following the attacks by Hamas. The news is surprising because the rapprochement between Riyadh and Tehran has never generated concrete results outside the diplomatic field, where US-led efforts on the process of normalization between the KSA and Israel have largely occupied the media space in recent months, putting the China-brokered KSA-Iran in the background.

Case in point is that, during a Fox News interview just over three weeks ago, Prince Mohamed Bin Salman announced that negotiations with Israel regarding relations normalization were moving forward. Yet with advent of the ongoing developments in Gaza, the normalization of KSA-Israel relations has

ISRAEL-GAZA WAR

Palestinians in Israeli custody

There are **at least 8,000 Palestinians in Israeli custody**, including more than **2,200 administrative detainees** held without charge or trial.

5,200

Palestinians held in Israeli prisons before October 7

3,000

more were arrested since October 7, including:

-  145 children
-  95 women
-  37 journalists

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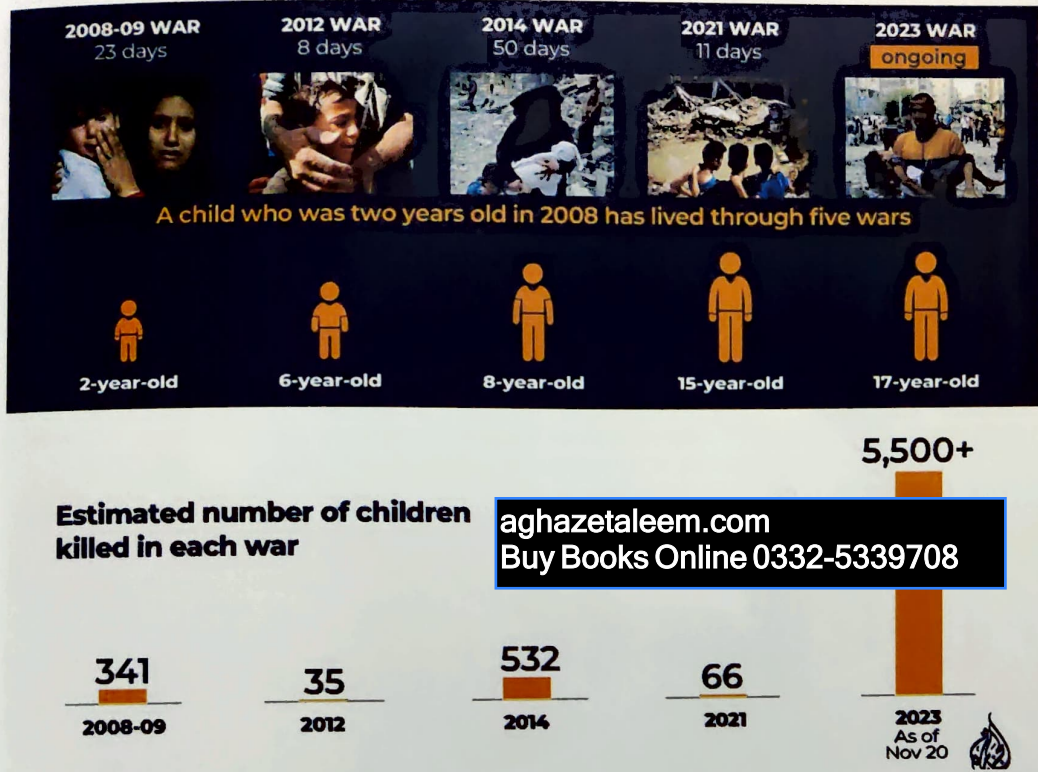
Israeli detention centres, interrogation centres, prisons and military courts



ISRAEL-GAZA WAR

Gaza's children: Living under war

About half of Gaza's population of 2.3 million is below the age of 18. Many Palestinian minors in Gaza have been traumatised by war, with some having experienced five Israeli assaults since 2008.



ground to a halt, which is obviously in Iran's interest. Regardless of the challenges facing the normalization of KSA-Israel relations, Iran's regional intentions remain a matter of concern. As US Secretary of State Anthony Blinken has visited Israel, Jordan, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), and Egypt to reaffirm the US condemnation of Hamas attacks and the US solidarity with Israel, Iran's Foreign Minister Hossein Amir Abdollahian is on a diplomatic tour in Iraq, Lebanon, and Syria. On the one hand, the US official visits in the region aim to involve regional partners in Washington's efforts to prevent the spread of the conflict to other

regional areas such as Lebanon, Syria, in addition to determining mechanisms to protect civilians. On the other, Iran may be indirectly aiming to politically coordinate with senior leaders of their resistance axis so as to prolong the period of the conflict and put Israel under pressure by widening the fighting's potential scope.

➤ **Hamas-Israel Strife and Challenges for Egypt**

The conflict in Gaza will have an impact on Egypt, posing significant security risks. With a shared border, Egypt is on the front lines of any potential mass influx of refugees from the Gaza Strip. The exacerbated tensions along the border with Egypt may prompt it to take action to protect its own security interests. Egypt's involvement could entail an increased military presence along the border, given that Egypt has been suffering over the past decade as a result of extremist activities and terrorism in the northeast of Sinai, close to the Gaza-Israel border. Additionally, domestic political considerations might have an impact on Egypt's participation in the conflict, particularly given that presidential elections are coming up in December. In this respect, due to the mass displacement of civilians in Gaza as a result of the ongoing massive Israeli assault, Egypt is already facing mounting pressure to open its border to allow refugees in, which will only broaden the regional scope of the crisis. However, Egypt is highly unlikely to allow the influx of refugees from Gaza to North Sinai and has affirmed that Palestinians should hold on to their cause and land, which is "the cause of all causes, the cause of all Arabs," as stated by Egypt's President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi.

➤ **Ongoing Israel-Palestine Conflict-Policy Choices for Global Actors**

International powers, such as the US, Russia, and the European Union (EU), have a vested interest in preventing the conflict from further escalating. These actors often attempt to mediate between the two sides, urging restraint and striving for a peaceful resolution. However, if their efforts fail, they may be compelled to choose sides or even intervene directly, as shown by the presence of US warships at unprecedented levels over the past few days. Amplifying the conflict's potential to snowball into a wider

regional war is something the international community should avoid. Furthermore, as different global powers have contrasting geopolitical interests in the Middle East, the escalation of the conflict between Israel and Hamas as well as other Iran-backed groups in Syria and Lebanon means that Russia will not remain on the outside looking in. Especially given that Iran has been the main ally for Russia in its war on Ukraine to date, this implies that Russia is very likely to support Iran and its proxy militias across the region.



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○ Potential Benefits for Russia

Russia has maintained a strong presence in Syria for almost a decade and has militarily supported President Assad's regime to date. Russia did not also directly condemn Hamas attacks, a sign of possibly deteriorating ties between Israel and Russia. The situation in the north of Israel is actually more critical given that Iran-backed groups in Lebanon and Syria are fully supported by Iran. In addition to Syria itself being fully supported by Iran and Russia, it is very possible that the current conflict will bring Russia and Iran even closer toward their shared interests in the Middle East, particularly with regard to countering the West. This perhaps explains why the Arab League Chief Ahmed Aboul Gheit headed to Moscow just two days after the Hamas attacks on Israel took place.

Furthermore, the currently developing conflict in Gaza provides an opportunity for Russia in its war on Ukraine. The conflict diverts Western powers' focus and resources towards the Middle East, allowing Russia to potentially bolster its forces, infrastructure, and capacities in Ukraine while the international community is occupied elsewhere. Russia could exploit this opportunity to consolidate territorial gains, increase support for separatist movements, or further advance its strategic interests in Eastern Europe. The diverted focus of Western allies on the Hamas-Israel conflict may inadvertently loosen regional alliances and commitments. With less scrutiny, Russia will engage in efforts to further consolidate its influence in neighboring countries within the post-Soviet sphere. By taking advantage of new geopolitical rifts, Russia may strengthen its strategic position and expand its sphere of influence in Eastern Europe, the Middle East, and West Africa.

○ China's Position

All that said, China's position is still unfolding towards the developing conflict in Gaza. Israel has already expressed its deep disappointment in China's lack of condemnation of Hamas attacks. Additionally, China Foreign Minister Wang Yi has blamed the rapidly deteriorating situation in the Middle East on the lack of justice for the Palestinians. Regardless of the geopolitical dynamics of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict that have been present for decades, China's recent statements may indicate that its views are aligned with those of Russia. Thus, adding more complexities to how different world powers conflicting views may lead to regional escalation in the Middle East. However, should the advantage of the situation to advance its own agenda on different strategic fronts, including in the South China Sea and Taiwan while the West's attention is diverted to Israel's conflict in Gaza. Most importantly, it may be the case that China is likely to view the situation in Gaza and the enflamed Middle East as an opportunity to open an additional confrontation front with the US, thus allowing China to enforce its influence in the region for its own strategic agenda.

➤ Conclusion

Overall, the situation is extremely complex given the unprecedented nature of the Hamas attacks of October 7, along with Israel's ongoing brutality in Gaza. Israeli airstrikes against Gaza have been targeting specific infrastructure, not only buildings where Hamas militants were allegedly hiding but also key infrastructure. This seems to indicate a potential ground operation to regain control over the Gaza Strip. While more than 150 hostages are still being held in the territory, and their location remains unknown, it is likely that Israel will intensify their air campaign prior to the initial ground response to the Hamas attack. Despite arguments on the motives behind Hamas' attacks and Iran's support, the emotional aspect resulting from the ongoing conflict in Gaza is immense and far-reaching across the Arab world. The mix of anger, solidarity, grief, fear, and the potential threat of radicalization collectively shape perceptions and attitudes among Arab populations. Achieving durable peace requires acknowledging and addressing the emotional dimensions of the conflict for both sides and empowering moderate voices within the Arab world for a peaceful resolution that respects the civilian rights and aspirations of all parties involved. As tensions continue to mount, it is imperative for international actors, regional powers, and the parties involved exercising the utmost restraint, prioritizing constructive negotiations, and working towards a sustainable and lasting peace while carefully considering the geopolitical implications of every action for international and regional powers. The last thing the world needs is a new regional war erupting in the Middle East.



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HUMANITARIAN LAW which Never Came for Rescue of **WEAKER**

International Law & Israel-Palestine Conflict

Unravelling the Distortions

The Israeli-Palestinian conflict has once again thrust itself into the global spotlight, with recent events sparking widespread debate on the role of international law in shaping the narrative. In this article, we dissect how international law is employed to mask the realities of Israeli settler-colonialism and explore the consequences of invoking the 'right to self-defense' within the context of the Israeli occupation of Palestinian territories.



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➤ Distorted Narratives and Legal Frameworks

○ False War Paradigm

The declaration of war by Israel in response to attacks on its towns initiated a chain of events leading to a devastating blockade of Gaza. The subsequent high civilian casualties and displacement have been framed as a 'war,' perpetuating a narrative that legitimizes Israel's actions. However, crucially absent from this narrative is the acknowledgment of the underlying issues of colonization, occupation, and apartheid.

○ Israel as a Colonizer

The roots of the conflict trace back to Israel's establishment as a colonizing state. Early UN resolutions characterized Palestine alongside other colonized nations, emphasizing the parallels with apartheid South Africa. The 1967 war and subsequent UN resolutions highlighted the inadmissibility of territorial acquisition by force, yet deliberate ambiguities paved the way for Israel's settlement activities.

Governing the Ungovernable

ISHRAT HUSAIN

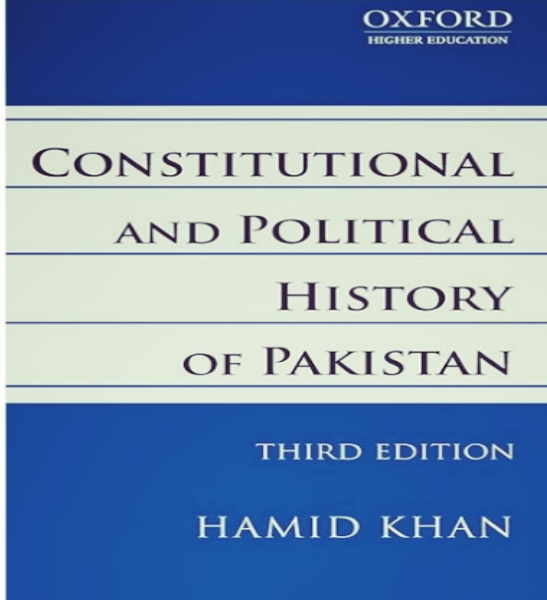
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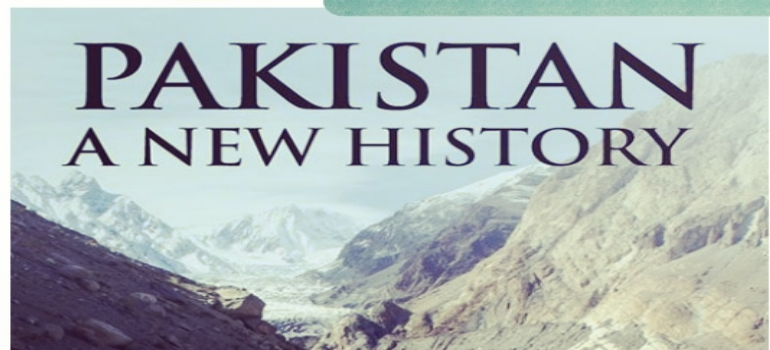
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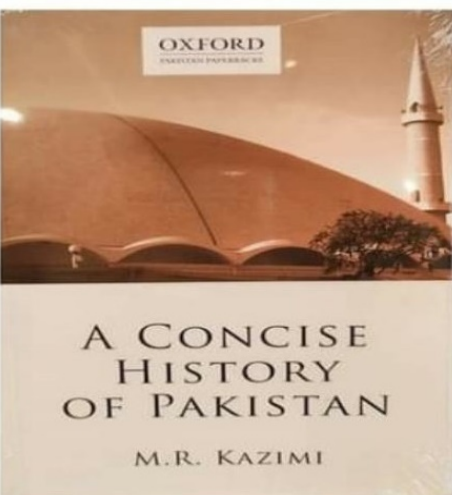


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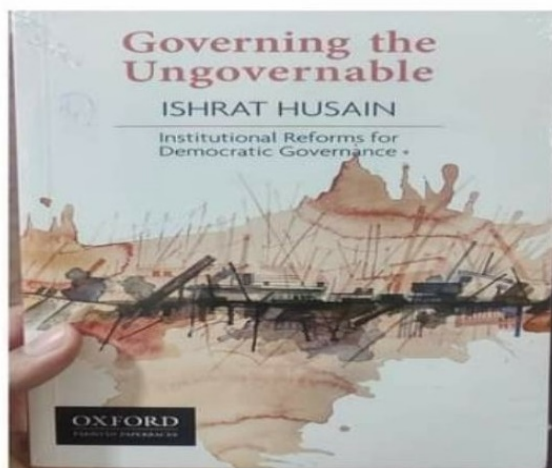
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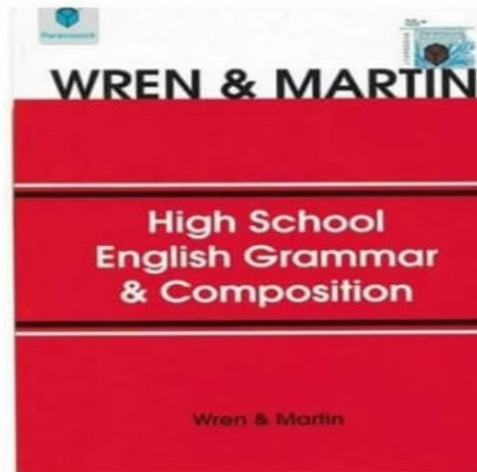
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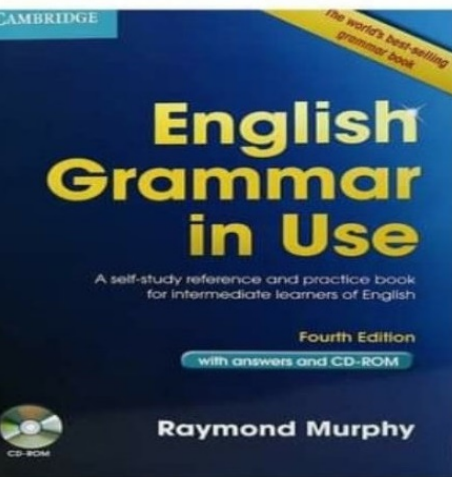
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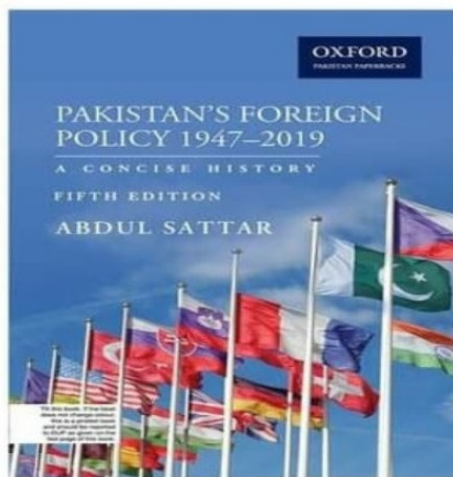


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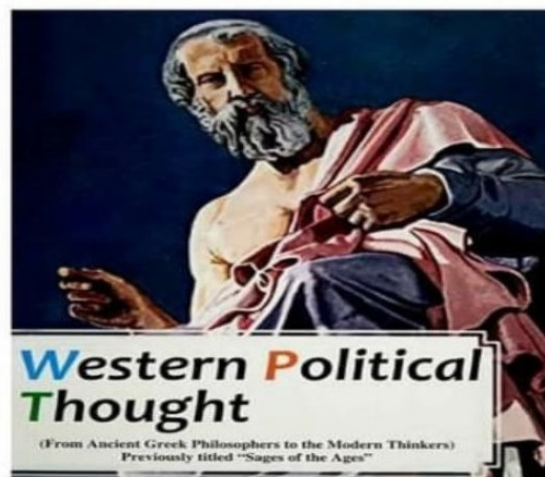
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○ Oslo Accords and Ongoing Oppression

The Oslo Accords in 1993 were presented as a peace agreement, masking the persistent oppression and dispossession faced by Palestinians. The international community's failure to address the root causes allowed Israel to continue its colonization and occupation, rendering the Oslo Accords ineffective in achieving genuine peace.

➤ The Right to Defend and the Right to Resist

○ Distorted Categories

Omitting the context of colonization and occupation categorizes Palestinians simplistically as either 'victims' or 'terrorists.' The humanitarian framing overlooks the root causes, perpetuating aid dependency, while labeling Palestinians as 'terrorists' denies their legitimate right to resist occupation, a right recognized in international law.

○ Self-Defense Fallacy

Israel's constant evocation of the 'right to defend itself' is contradicted by international law. Article 51 of the UN Charter legitimizes the use of force in self-defense, but it cannot be invoked when the threat originates from within an occupied territory. The International Court of Justice affirmed this principle, emphasizing Gaza's status as occupied and condemning Israel's actions as war crimes.

○ Collective Punishment in Gaza

The ongoing humanitarian crisis in Gaza, exacerbated by Israel's control over essential supplies, highlights the perpetration of war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide. The indiscriminate use of force, forced displacement, and denial of basic necessities constitute a systemic violence against the Palestinian people.

➤ Outdated Laws of War and Accountability

○ Flawed Legal Framework

Attempts to justify civilian casualties by invoking the laws of war reveal a reliance on outdated norms that fail to address power asymmetry, technological advancements, and economic interests shaping modern warfare. The laws of war, developed during colonial times, lack efficacy in addressing contemporary conflicts, especially those outside the Global North.

○ Accountability and International Criminal Court

The international community's reluctance to update the laws of war aligns with the continuation of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The International Criminal Court's jurisdiction over war crimes in the Occupied Palestinian Territory presents an avenue for accountability. The ongoing investigation into possible crimes in Palestine underscores the urgency of holding responsible parties accountable.

➤ International Humanitarian Law in Israel and Gaza

○ Legal Definitions and Application

The aftermath of attacks by Hamas and Israel prompts discussions on international humanitarian law (IHL). IHL, outlined in the Geneva Conventions, binds states and non-state armed groups involved in

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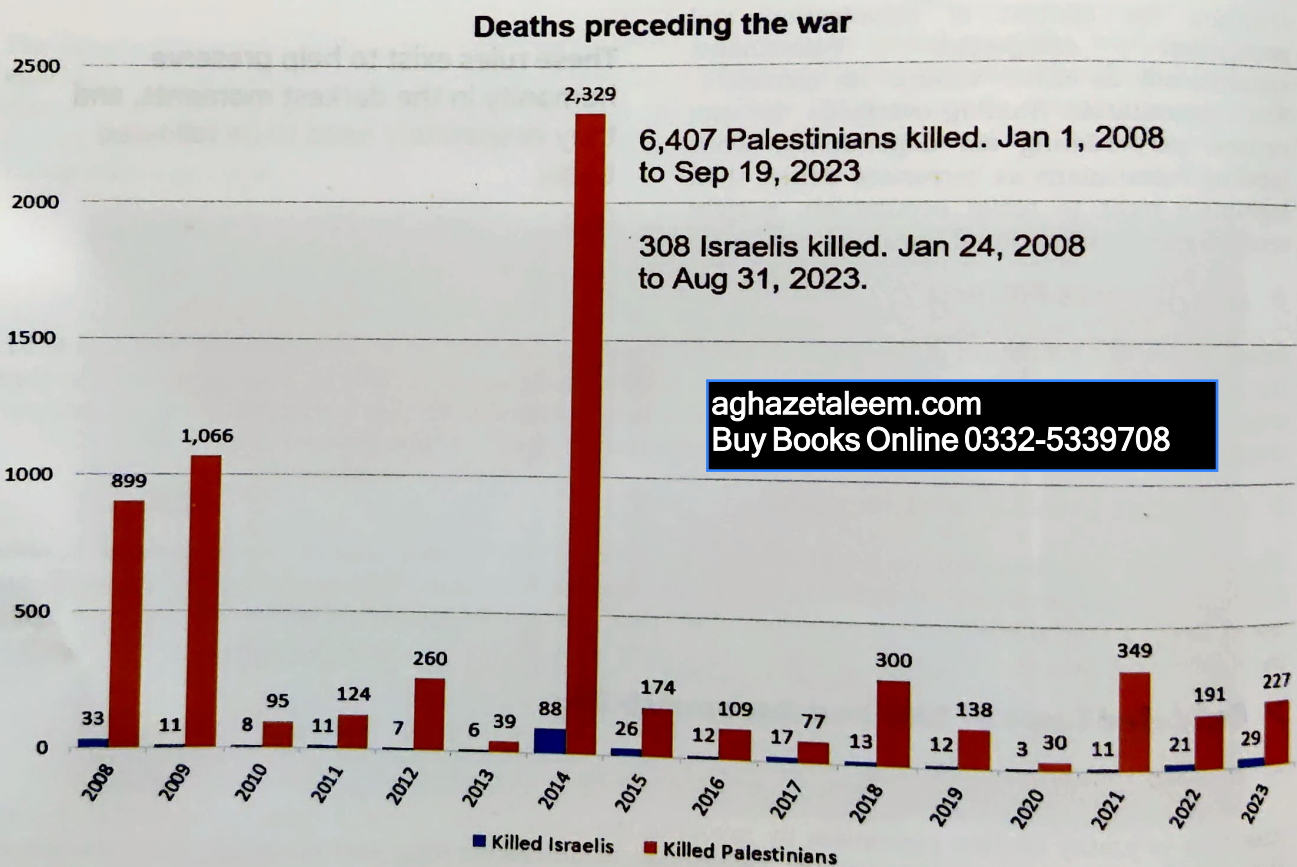
conflicts. The non-reciprocal nature of IHL emphasizes the absolute prohibition of violations, irrespective of the opposing party's actions.

○ Basic Rules of the Laws of War

IHL establishes fundamental rules governing armed conflicts, emphasizing the distinction between combatants and civilians. Deliberate targeting of civilians, taking hostages, and collective punishment are considered war crimes. The occupying power, in this case, Israel, must ensure the humane treatment of the population and meet their basic needs.

○ War Crimes and Accountability

The conflict in Israel and Gaza has witnessed multiple war crimes, including attacks violating the laws of war. Both Israeli forces and Palestinian armed groups are implicated, and individuals responsible for war crimes, including commanders and civilian leaders, are criminally liable. The International Criminal Court's ongoing investigation holds the promise of accountability for these serious violations.



➤ Effectiveness of International Humanitarian Law

○ Classifying the Conflict

The legal classification of the conflict, whether as a non-international armed conflict or an international armed conflict due to occupation, influences the application of international humanitarian law. The ongoing control of Gaza by Israel, despite troop withdrawal, maintains its status as occupied territory under IHL.

○ Siege and Violations

The imposition of a "total siege" on Gaza raises concerns regarding compliance with international humanitarian law. While a siege is not explicitly prohibited, its consequences often lead to violations, such as starvation and impeding humanitarian relief efforts. The unleashing of violence in the conflict invariably results in massive violations of international humanitarian law and potential war crimes.

○ International Obligations

States, including Canada, have a duty to ensure respect for international humanitarian law. Third States must remind parties in the conflict of their obligations, emphasizing the importance of upholding international humanitarian law even in situations of abuse. Abandoning the pursuit of respect for these laws risks further chaos and undermines efforts to mitigate the impact of armed conflicts.

○ Towards Acknowledgment and Accountability

As the Israeli-Palestinian conflict persists, unravelling the distortions surrounding international law becomes imperative. Acknowledging the realities of settler-colonialism, occupation, and apartheid is crucial for addressing the root causes and moving towards a just and lasting resolution. Effective accountability, facilitated through mechanisms like the International Criminal Court, is essential in ending the cycles of violence and promoting a future built on respect for international humanitarian law.

➤ Critical Analysis

As per the United Nations, there is no single document in international law that codifies all war crimes. Various branches of international law, including humanitarian, criminal, and customary laws, contain lists classifying acts as "war crimes." The UN defines war crimes as actions during armed conflicts that breach the Geneva Conventions and violate international humanitarian law, also known as the "law of armed conflict." This law aims to limit the impact of war and focuses on protecting individuals not or no longer involved in hostilities. The recent escalation in the Israel-Palestine conflict has led to unprecedented collateral damage, with over 100 children reported killed daily since October 7. The death toll has surpassed 6,000, making it one of the deadliest Israeli assaults in decades. The fundamental principle of war, distinguishing between combatants and civilians, has been shattered under the guise of "collateral damage."

According to international law, armed conflicts must adhere to rules set forth in the Geneva Conventions of 1949. Children are to be protected and treated humanely. While Israel ratified these conventions in 1951, it exempted itself from the 4th Geneva Convention, disavowing Palestine as an occupied land. UNICEF has repeatedly called for unimpeded humanitarian access to the besieged Gaza Strip, where half the population is under 18. The recent strike on Al-Ahli Arab Hospital in Gaza resulted in over 500 deaths, including innocent civilians seeking refuge. Article 18 of the Geneva Convention provides special protection to hospitals, yet ongoing attacks on medical facilities constitute a grave violation of international law. Warring parties are obligated to attack only military objectives and spare civilian objects, but the relentless shelling of Gaza has put 2.3 million residents at risk since the blockade in 2007.

Human Rights Watch accused Israel of using white phosphorus in attacks on Gaza on October 11, posing severe risks to civilians and violating international humanitarian law. The current situation in Gaza is termed "collective punishment," imposing sanctions on a targeted group for actions they did not commit. With dwindling clean water, over two million people face severe life-threatening risks, resorting to drinking contaminated water with perils of disease, dehydration, and death. Swift accountability and impartial justice are essential to address egregious international law violations. The responsibility now rests on international powers to de-escalate the conflict, ensure humanitarian aid reaches Gaza, and hold perpetrators accountable for war crimes in the International Criminal Court. Upholding justice is crucial to resolving this man-made disaster and preventing further civilian suffering.



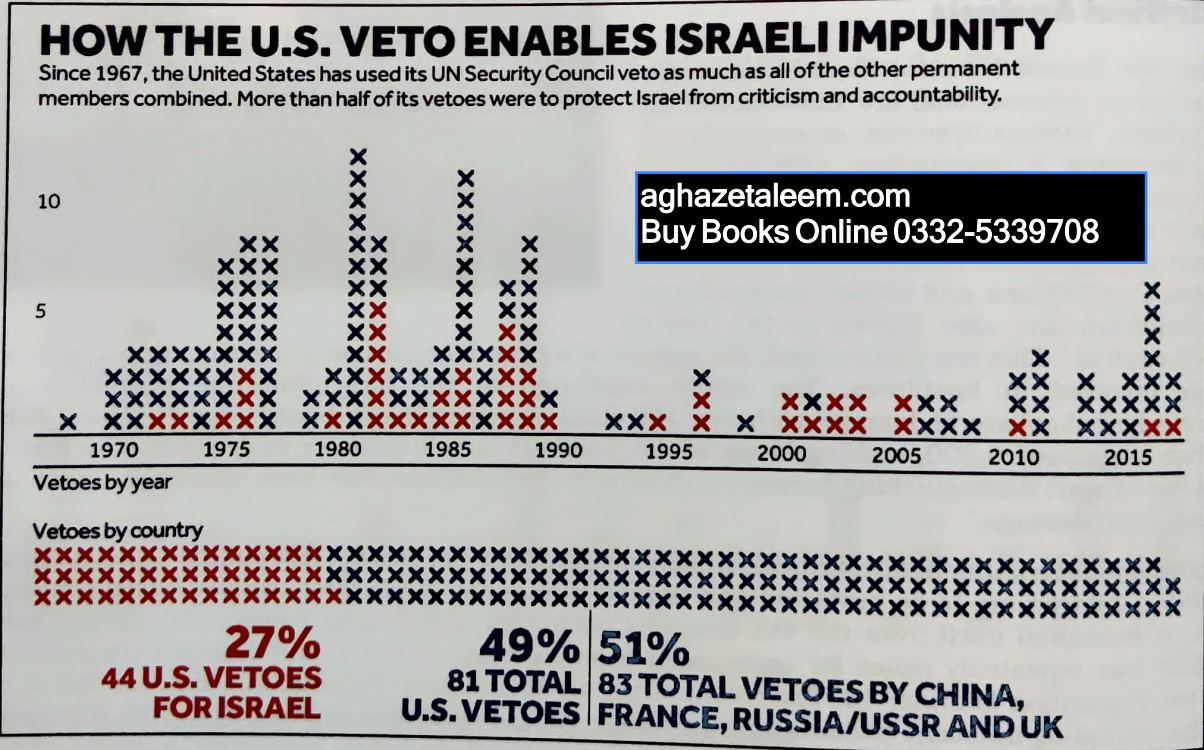
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'DOUBLE STANDARDS': World reacts to US veto on GAZA

US Veto to Gaza Ceasefire Bid: Fuels Warning of Wider Conflict

~ ~ Machiavellian Agenda of Biden's Administration

The United States' recent veto of a UN resolution, co-sponsored by 100 countries, calling for an immediate humanitarian ceasefire in Gaza has drawn global criticism. The veto, coupled with Britain's abstention, resulted in the resolution's failure, despite support from 13 of the 15 UNSC members. This veto has intensified the conflict, drawing widespread condemnation. Israel, empowered by the veto, has escalated its attacks on Gaza, resulting in a significant death toll and humanitarian crisis. The ongoing conflict has claimed over 17,400 Palestinian lives and approximately 1,100 in Israel since October 7.



o Immediate Consequences of the veto

Following the US veto, Israel conducted intense bombardments in Gaza, leading to approximately 150 deaths in the past 24 hours. The conflict has raised alarms about an impending humanitarian catastrophe, with aid workers warning of a collapse in Gaza's humanitarian system, threatening disease and starvation.

US veto of ceasefire resolution displays callous disregard for civilian suffering in face of staggering death toll. It is morally indefensible, a dereliction of the US duty to prevent atrocity crimes and a complete lack of global leadership. Just appalling - Agnes Callamard

○ Reactions from Palestine and Hamas

Palestinian leaders strongly condemned the US veto, with President Mahmoud Abbas labeling it "complicit" in war crimes. Prime Minister Mohammad Shtayyeh criticized it as a "disgrace," and Hamas deemed it "unethical and inhumane," accusing the US of participating in atrocities.

○ Global Reactions

World leaders, international organizations, and Muslim countries expressed denouncement and disappointment. Palestinian authorities criticized the US, with President Mahmoud Abbas holding it "complicit" in war crimes. Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan labeled the UN Security Council the 'Israel protection council,' emphasizing the severity of the situation. Amnesty International accused the US of a "callous disregard" for civilian suffering, while Doctors Without Borders stated the US veto made it "complicit in the carnage." Human Rights Watch criticized the US for potentially being complicit in war crimes by providing support to Israel.

We are devastated by the UN Security Council's failure to adopt a resolution demanding a ceasefire in Gaza—blocked by a solitary veto from the United States. "By vetoing this resolution, the US stands alone in casting its vote against humanity." Doctors Without Borders

○ US Justification and subsequent International Criticism

The US justified its veto, asserting the resolution was imbalanced and wouldn't contribute to a sustainable ceasefire. However, this move faced strong international criticism. Amnesty International condemned the US for a "callous disregard" for civilian suffering, and Doctors Without Borders deemed the veto as complicity in the Gaza carnage. Israel's UN ambassador, Gilad Erdan, linked a ceasefire to the return of hostages and Hamas's destruction. Deputy US ambassador Robert Wood defended the veto, describing the draft resolution as rushed and imbalanced, asserting it wouldn't contribute to concrete progress.

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○ Global Concerns and Calls for Ceasefire

Countries worldwide expressed disappointment, with the UK abstaining due to the resolution's lack of condemnation for Hamas. Iran warned of an "uncontrollable explosion" in the Middle East, and China criticized the US for double standards. Turkey called for UN Security Council reform, emphasizing the need for justice and a fair world. In addition, Russia accused the US of issuing a "death sentence" to civilians, and France lamented the UNSC's failure to address the crisis. Turkey's President Erdogan criticized the US for supporting Israel, calling for UN Security Council reform. Other nations like Oman and Malaysia also expressed regret and objection to the US veto.

"By continuing to provide Israel with weapons [and] diplomatic cover as it commits atrocities, including collectively punishing the Palestinian civilian population in Gaza, the US risks complicity in war crimes." Human Rights Watch

○ Humanitarian Crisis and Impact on Gaza

The conflict has left vast areas of Gaza in ruins, displacing around 80% of the population and causing severe shortages of food, fuel, water, and medicine. Hospitals and infrastructure are targeted, exacerbating the dire situation. UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres highlighted the urgent need for a ceasefire to prevent irreversible consequences for regional peace and security.

○ Global Critique and Accountability

Critics worldwide, including former government officials and human rights advocates, accused the US, especially President Biden, of complicity in the ongoing conflict. The failure of the international community to halt Israel's actions and the US's unwavering support were strongly condemned. As the

conflict in Gaza intensifies, the vetoed UN resolution and subsequent events have triggered a broader crisis. The world watches with growing concern as the humanitarian situation worsens, and calls for an immediate ceasefire persist amidst a backdrop of global condemnation for the actions of the US and Israel. The UK abstained due to the resolution lacking condemnation of Hamas, while the UAE questioned the message sent by the UNSC's inability to unite for a Gaza ceasefire. Iran warned of an "uncontrollable explosion" in the Middle East, and China criticized the US for double standards.

"As long as America supports the crimes of the Zionist regime (Israel) and the continuation of the war ... there is a possibility of an uncontrollable explosion in the situation of the region,"

Amirabdollahian – Iranian FM

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○ *Voices of Dissent and Accountability*

Critics worldwide, including Yanis Varoufakis and Helen Clark, accused the US, especially President Biden, of complicity in the ongoing conflict. Craig Mokhiber, former head of the UN Human Rights office in New York, denounced the US for vetoing a ceasefire, highlighting the impact on the Palestinian population.

➤ **Controversial US Veto Legacy in UNSC Resolutions on Israel-Palestine**

The US consistently aligns its response to United Nations Security Council (UNSC) resolutions with its historical use of the veto power, blocking resolutions critical of Israel or advocating Palestinian statehood. Since 1945, 36 UNSC draft resolutions related to Israel-Palestine have been vetoed, with the US responsible for 34, while Russia and China vetoed two each among the five permanent members. These resolutions aimed to establish a peace framework for the enduring Israel-Palestine conflict, addressing issues like international law adherence, self-determination for Palestinian statehood, and condemnation of Israeli actions leading to displacement or settlement building.



The US has wielded its veto power 46 times, encompassing events such as Israel's invasion of southern Lebanon and the annexation of the Syrian Golan Heights, with a significant policy shift in 2019 when Washington formally recognized Israeli sovereignty over the Golan Heights. A notable exception was the 1972 draft resolution, where the US refrained from vetoing, urging an immediate cessation of military operations for international peace and security. Under the key resolutions blocked by the US, the October 18, 2023 Gaza faced a US veto. The US ambassador emphasized the importance of informed actions based on ground realities and direct diplomacy to save lives. Other instances include the US vetoing a 2018 resolution after the Great March of Return, condemning Israeli forces' use of force against Palestinian civilians. In 2017, following the US recognition of Jerusalem as Israel's capital, a draft resolution demanding adherence to UN regulations for determining Jerusalem's status was vetoed, despite unanimous support from other UNSC members. The US also vetoed a 2000 resolution post the second Intifada, expressing concern, condemning attacks, and urging Israel to comply with the Fourth Geneva Convention, with then-US Ambassador John Negroponte citing a perceived attempt to politically isolate one party in the conflict.

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan on Saturday denounced the UN Security Council after the United States vetoed a ceasefire resolution for Gaza, describing the international body as the 'Israel protection council'. "Since October 7, the security council has become an Israel protection and defence council," Erdogan said. "Is this justice?" asked Erdogan, adding that "the world is bigger than five," a reference to the five veto-wielding nations in the UN Security Council. "Another world is possible, but without America," the Turkish leader said.

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A Story of Confusions, Slip-Ups & Rhetoric

Terrorism: Decoding Myths, Realities & Required Actions

Persistent terrorist attacks originating from the Pak-Afghan border show no signs of abating, inflicting a significant toll on Pakistani lives. Incidents of suicide bombings, already surpassing the total count for the entire year of 2022, and indiscriminate terrorist assaults are widespread.

➤ Operation Zarb e Azb and the Missed Opportunity to Eradicate Terrorism



Operation Zarb e Azb, a meticulously planned and executed military campaign against terrorists in the former Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA), proved highly successful in breaking their stronghold and expelling them beyond Pakistan's territorial limits. The operation could have achieved its envisioned objectives had the US-NATO-ISAF joined the bold and aggressive initiative proposed by Pakistan. A strategic culmination, blocking escape routes along the Pak-Afghan border, would have trapped terrorist groups in a decisive cul de sac. The combined force of Pakistan's military and the

US-NATO-ISAF could have served as an impenetrable anvil, potentially closing the chapter on terrorism in the region. However, for reasons unknown, the US-NATO-ISAF chose not to participate, allowing numerous terrorists to escape into the rugged terrain of Afghanistan. This decision, coupled with the absence of subsequent meaningful operations, provided a window for hostile intelligence agencies in the region to facilitate the reorganization and revitalization of terrorist groups. As a result, these groups found a conducive environment as the US-NATO-ISAF departed from Afghanistan and the Taliban assumed control in Kabul, enabling them to freely fortify bases and launch audacious forays across the Pak-Afghan border.

➤ Aftermath of the US Withdrawal

The withdrawal of the US-NATO-ISAF from Afghanistan unfolded in an unceremonious, confused, and hastily executed manner, providing an opportune moment for the Taliban to swiftly establish their government in Kabul. Despite their primary focus on securing their own and national interests, the Taliban found themselves contending with a multitude of terrorist groups scattered across the Afghan wilderness. Cognizant of the potential unity of these groups against them, the Taliban remained cautious and aimed to keep them at a distance from Kabul. Simultaneously, the Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) and other factions gained access to sophisticated weapons and equipment left behind by the departing US-NATO-ISAF, significantly enhancing their capacity for terrorist attacks. The Taliban, while ostensibly friendly, could not permit such well-armed groups to pose threats, leading to an alignment of interests between the Taliban and the TTP. This convergence facilitated the TTP's initiation of malicious terrorist campaigns across the Pak-Afghan border into Pakistan, a situation where the Taliban, despite rhetorical stances, took limited practical measures to impede groups like TTP, ISK, JuA, operating from their established bases within Afghanistan.

➤ The Unfavorable Impact of Kabul's Government Change

The alteration in Kabul's government has not yielded positive outcomes for the regional terrorism dilemma. Instead, its repercussions on Pakistan have been agonizing. Diplomatically and politically, a

growing sense of mutual mistrust between Afghanistan and Pakistan is evident due to the Taliban's reluctance to confront terrorism directly. Their attempts to facilitate dialogue between the TTP and Pakistan have proven fruitless, marking a significant error on Pakistan's part. Respectable nations do not negotiate with terrorists; they subdue them and dictate terms after. An even graver mistake was resettling them in the former FATA without subjecting them to rehabilitation and de-indoctrination. Frustrated Pakistani officials now contemplate extending the battle across the Pak-Afghan border, but the Taliban seem indifferent, prioritizing their own interests over Pakistan's concerns.

On the terrorism front, Pakistan continues to endure suffering.

The Afghan environment has become highly conducive to terrorists, adversely affecting Pakistan in several ways. Cross-border terrorist attacks have surged in number, intensity, and audacity. The TTP, ISK, and their affiliates operate with confidence, relying on secure bases and support in Afghanistan. Armed with sophisticated weapons and equipment left by the US-NATO-ISAF, they have enhanced their capacity and capability for terrorism in various terrains and weather conditions. Improved training, modified tactics, night operations, better leadership, and enhanced intelligence contribute to their audacious attacks on Pakistani forces and civilian targets.

► **Taliban Disregard for International Commitments: Implications for Regional Counterterrorism Efforts**

The Taliban have consistently shown disdain for international agreements and regional efforts aimed at combating terrorism. Despite reminders from Pakistan about their commitments under the Doha Agreement, they brusquely dismissed Islamabad's concerns, emphasizing that the agreement was with the US, not Pakistan. This could be interpreted in various ways: firstly, they may lack the capacity to handle the numerous terrorist groups within Afghanistan; secondly, they may be reluctant to incite reactions or provoke existential threats from these groups; and thirdly, they may feel indebted to some groups for their support during struggles against the US-led ISAF. Regardless of the rationale, their stance implies complicity in perpetuating terrorism in the region.

► **The Resurgence of TTP**

Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) has staged a resurgence, posing a substantial threat to Pakistan's security. Despite expectations of decline, TTP has reemerged forcefully, orchestrating a surge in terrorist attacks across the country. Driven by a desire to establish Shariah law and viewing the existing structures as 'un-Islamic,' TTP engages in defensive Jihad against Pakistan's armed forces. Originally concentrated in KPK near the Afghan border, the group is now expanding into Balochistan, evident in the recent Zhob massacre.

During the Zhob attack, TTP employed advanced technology, including M16 rifles left by the US in Afghanistan. Concerns about TTP becoming a proxy for hostile intelligence agencies arose after the US withdrawal, and although military operations initially weakened the group, the vacuum left by the withdrawal allowed for regrouping. The fall of Kabul strengthened TTP, benefiting from shared ideological ties with the Afghan Taliban. Porous Pakistan-Afghanistan borders facilitated cross-border strikes,

The Impact of Terrorism Around the World

Impact of terrorism in countries according to the Global Terrorism Index (2023)

■ Very high ■ High ■ Medium ■ Low ■ Very low ■ No impact



Source: Institute for Economics and Peace



recruitment, and sustained supply chains. By May 2023, TTP claimed over 75 attacks in Pakistan, employing various methods such as sectarian violence, targeted killings, kidnapping, suicide bombings, and guerrilla tactics.

TTP's aspirations to merge with other militant groups, demonstrated through alliances with the Yasir Dawar group, a Baloch jihadist faction, and two other militant groups, have enhanced its operational capacity. The 'Endgame Strategy' underestimated TTP's persistence post-conflict in Afghanistan, impacting Pakistan's security and regional stability. While Pakistan's security forces have conducted effective operations, a comprehensive approach is

necessary. Socio-economic development, particularly in marginalized areas, can reduce the appeal of extremist ideologies. Strengthening partnerships with countries like Saudi Arabia, UAE, China, the USA, and Afghanistan through strategic planning, information sharing, joint operations, and regional cooperation is crucial to counter TTP's resurgence and prevent sanctuaries in Afghanistan. This comprehensive approach aims to control cross-border attacks by TTP militants.

➤ **Challenges in Pak-Afghan Relations: Tensions, Talks, and Counter-Terrorism Efforts**

Casualties from TTP-led attacks continue to rise, creating strain in Pak-Afghan relations. Proxy terror outfits like ISKP, BLF, and Ahrarul-Hind, believed to use Afghan soil, contribute to the violence. A recent trip to Kandahar and Kabul reveals Taliban officials' concerns about Pakistan's criticism of their counter-terrorism efforts. The Pakistan army chief's rejection of talks with TTP has led to unease in Kabul and Kandahar. Despite the Taliban's efforts to counter-terrorism, they acknowledge ideological and capacity limits. A decree barring cross-border attacks shows a commitment, but Pakistani officials seek open denouncement of TTP. Kabul emphasizes the need for patience and desires friendly relations with neighbors, citing ongoing efforts to neutralize threats. Hamid Karzai suggests a candid, behind-the-scenes approach to address issues constructively. Despite challenges, both sides express the importance of time and corrective measures for a positive way forward.

➤ **Challenges in National Security Discourse**

In the wake of a resurgence in militancy, including suicide attacks in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) and target killings, political leaders have engaged in blaming the military despite border controls. This trend, seen as opportunistic political point-scoring, reveals the failure of political parties to provide a comprehensive security policy. Historical patterns show parties targeting the military for political survival, shaping public opinion for sympathy. Ethnic-based political parties in KP, such as ANP and Pakhtunkhwa Milli Awami Party, have lost public confidence, paving the way for PTI. Movements like Pakhtoon Tahaffuz Movement are seen as potentially detrimental to national security, fostering internal strife. Social media, manipulated by hired influencers, perpetuates false narratives against the military, impacting younger generations. Despite General Asim Munir's commitment to non-interference, social media continues to spread harmful propaganda. Political parties' failure to provide ideological training, involvement in victimization politics, and promotion of an intolerant culture have negative societal consequences. Previous military operations, while not futile, have transformed FATA and strengthened national unity. The urgent need is for collective action, with citizens supporting security forces to counter internal and external threats. Youth must resist negative propaganda and uphold the ideological

foundations of their country. Political parties should cease victimization policies, and the interim federal government should expedite the transfer of power to elected representatives.

➤ **Pakistan's Struggle against Terrorism Financing and the Path to a Secure Future**

Pakistan grapples with formidable obstacles in countering terrorism financing, stemming from its intricate geopolitical setting, porous borders, and historical connections to extremist factions. The provision of funds to terrorist entities for recruitment, training, and acts of terror poses a global security threat. The proximity to conflict-ridden Afghanistan exacerbates challenges in monitoring cross-border movements, while Pakistan's extensive informal economy creates opportunities for illicit financial activities. Despite these challenges, the nation has made significant legal strides, enacting measures like the Anti-Money Laundering Act and the Anti-Terrorism Act.



Pakistan's Financial Monitoring Unit collaborates internationally to investigate terrorism financing networks, recognizing the transnational nature of this issue. Financial-sector reforms, including robust KYC and CDD procedures, aim to identify and report suspicious transactions promptly. Public awareness campaigns encourage citizens to report activities contributing to terrorism financing. Strengthening border security through advanced technology and collaboration with neighboring countries is crucial. Training for financial intelligence units and regulation of informal money transfer systems further fortify anti-terrorism financing measures.

Collaboration with international partners, implementing KYC and CDD procedures, conducting regular audits, and public awareness campaigns are pivotal in tackling terrorism financing. Investment in rehabilitation programs and addressing socioeconomic disparities are essential for long-term success. A comprehensive approach, combining short-term actions with sustained efforts, is crucial. Promoting peace, tolerance, and critical thinking, along with countering extremist ideologies, will contribute to a safer future for Pakistan.

➤ **Reassessing Pakistan's Afghan Policy**

Pakistan's current approach to Afghanistan falls significantly short of securing its vital national interests. It fails to meet two crucial policy objectives: effectively engaging with the Taliban in Kabul and mitigating the threat of cross-border terrorism. Policy formulation and decision-making require clarity of thought, and the current tendency to address militancy and terrorism through political or diplomatic



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talks has proven ineffective and self-defeating. While non-kinetic options like diplomatic and economic sanctions are often attempted, their failure necessitates a shift to kinetic options involving a combination of diplomatic, economic, and military coercion.

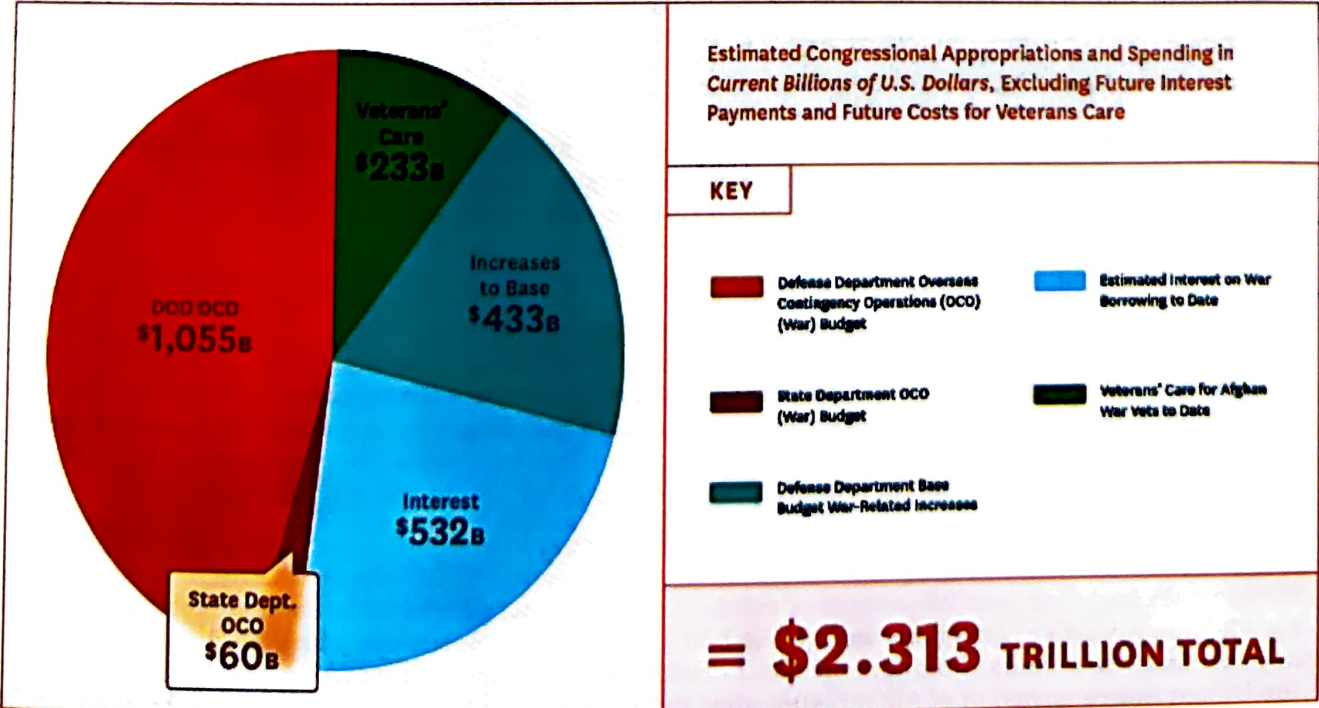
A profound re-evaluation of Pakistan's Afghan policy is imperative, demanding a significant paradigm shift and a fresh approach. The cautious and tentative dealings with Kabul must transform, recognizing that the Taliban are not a solution to terrorism but an integral part of the problem. Attempts to co-opt them into the solution have historically failed, with the Taliban undermining and sabotaging such efforts. The current environment benefits the Taliban, keeping Pakistan in a vulnerable position and diverting belligerent terrorist groups like the TTP, JuA, and ISK elsewhere along its borders. It is crucial for Pakistan to understand and act upon the need for strategic realignment in its approach to Afghanistan.

➤ **Crafting a Comprehensive Strategy to Confront Terrorism**

The foundation of this policy must strictly adhere to the principles of realpolitik, prioritizing the dedicated pursuit of national interests. A three-pronged approach, encompassing diplomatic, economic, and military actions, is essential. Diplomatic engagement with Kabul should be managed by the Foreign Office, economic pressure should be exerted, and the Armed Forces should confront terrorists. Economic measures may involve stringent oversight of transit trade, enhanced duties, tariffs, and levies. Ceasing all smuggling along the Pak-Afghan border, particularly of food grains and drugs, is imperative. The influx of Afghan refugees, some potentially infiltrated by terrorists, must be closely monitored, with the UN and the international community urged to promptly and dignifiedly repatriate them.

While the Foreign Office handles diplomatic engagement, the military must decisively confront and eradicate terrorists. Military operations should aim to create a strategic environment where defeated terrorists comply with Pakistan's directives. Recognizing that replicating Operation Zarb e Azb may not be effective, the Armed Forces must adopt a new operational strategy. Proactive surgical, pre-emptive, and punitive strikes on terrorist bases are crucial. Anticipating a strong Taliban response, including a surge in terrorist attacks and diplomatic tensions, Pakistan must be prepared to manage these consequences domestically, regionally, and globally. All relevant state agencies, including the government, the Foreign Office, and the Interior Ministry, must be equipped to handle these repercussions. Pakistan must stand unwaveringly by this comprehensive policy, comprehensively, physically, and irreversibly defeating terrorists, regardless of associated costs. It is time for bold action to safeguard citizens and vital national interests.

U.S. Costs to Date for the War in Afghanistan, in \$ Billions FY2001–FY2022*



There should be a **METHOD TO THE MADNESS...**

Repatriation of Afghan Refugees:

Rising Tensions and Historical Precedents



○ Government's Directive and Security Concerns

Pakistan's government has mandated the departure of hundreds of thousands of undocumented migrants and refugees, primarily Afghans either voluntarily or by force. Citing a surge in violent attacks, Interior Minister Sarfraz Bugti highlighted that a significant portion of this year's suicide bombings were perpetrated by Afghan nationals. The surge in violence is concentrated in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan, both bordering Afghanistan, leading the government to accuse the Afghan Taliban of sheltering Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) fighters.

○ Afghanistan's Strong Rejection and Diplomatic Efforts

The interim Afghan government, led by the Taliban, strongly rebuked Pakistan's announcement, deeming it "unacceptable." Afghanistan's spokesperson, Zabihullah Mujahid, urged Pakistan to reconsider the decision, asserting that Afghan refugees are not linked to Pakistan's security issues. In response, Pakistan initiated high-level negotiations in Kabul, emphasizing the need for improved border controls along their shared 2,640km-long border characterized by challenging topography.

○ Historical Context and Previous Operations

This is not the first instance of such measures by Pakistan. Historical operations in 2016 and subsequent years witnessed the return and expulsion of hundreds of thousands of Afghan immigrants, drawing criticism from Human Rights Watch. These actions were driven by similar allegations that TTP fighters were using Afghan soil to launch attacks in Pakistan, citing security concerns.

○ Refugee Statistics and Displacement Trends

Estimates reveal that over 95 percent of refugees in Pakistan, whether documented or undocumented, are Afghan nationals. The refugee influx began in 1979 after the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, resulting in more than three million Afghans fleeing to Pakistan. A subsequent wave occurred in 2001 following the United States' invasion of Afghanistan after the September 11 attacks. Presently, 1.3 million Afghan

refugees reside in Pakistan, with concentrations in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (50 percent) and Balochistan (24 percent).

o Undisclosed Deportation Plans and Future Measures

The Pakistani government has not disclosed specific plans for deporting undocumented individuals after the November 1 deadline. The Ministry of Interior Affairs, regional police, and the Federal Investigation Agency will identify and carry out deportations. Post-deadline, a task force will be established, with undocumented Afghans handed over to Afghan officials, unless wanted for suspected criminal activities by Pakistani authorities.



PAKISTAN Voluntary repatriation of Afghan refugees

(1 January to 31 October 2023)

4.40 MILLION approx

Number of Afghan refugees assisted through voluntary repatriation programme since 2002

787,068

Number of households assisted through voluntary repatriation programme since 2002

70% Azakhel **30%** Baleli

**% of Refugee returnees through voluntary repatriation centres (VRCs) since 2002

16,354*

RETURNEES TO AFGHANISTAN FROM 1 JAN - 31 OCT 2023

3,744
Households

UNHCR Assistance Package

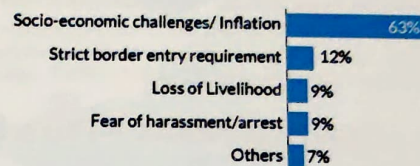
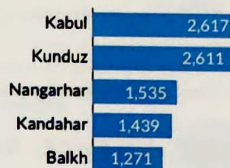
375 USD/ Individual

375 USD CARE Package - Fam Size 1 or 700 USD CARE Package - Fam Size 2 +

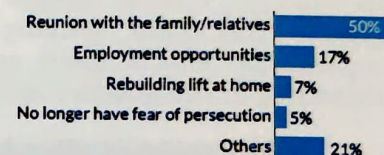
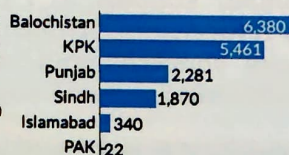
48% Azakhel **52%** Baleli

**% Refugee returnees through voluntary repatriation centres (VRCs) from Jan - Oct, 2023

Place of intended return (Top 5) ***Reasons for leaving Pakistan(Push Factors)



Place of Residence in Pakistan ***Reasons for return to Afghanistan (Pull Factors)



Navigating the Afghan Refugee Conundrum: A Comprehensive Analysis

o Decades of Hosting and the Current Challenge

Afghanistan's tumultuous history has led to waves of refugees seeking sanctuary, with millions finding a home in Pakistan since the Soviet invasion in 1979. Recently, Pakistan initiated one of the largest repatriation programs in UNHCR's history, aiming to address the economic burden posed by approximately 3 million remaining Afghan refugees. This section delves into the multifaceted issues surrounding repatriation, security concerns, international obligations, and the need for collaborative solutions.

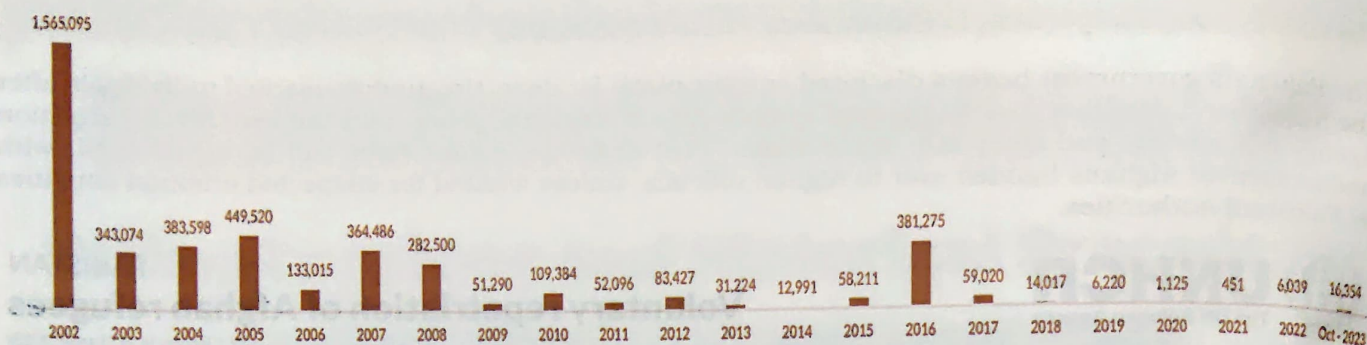
o Changing Dynamics and Policy Shifts-From Temporary Protection to Urgent Repatriation

Initially adopting a policy of temporary protection with voluntary return as the preferred option, Pakistan grapples with the evolving nature of the Afghan conflict. Despite agreements with Afghanistan and UNHCR, comprehensive repatriation faces hurdles. Security issues persist, and the porous Pak-Afghan border complicates efforts to prevent new refugee inflows. The lack of proper documentation and delayed census further complicates managing the Afghan population in Pakistan.

o Economic Challenges and Security Concerns- The Dilemma of Afghan Refugees

Economic problems and insecurity in Afghanistan hinder repatriation, with 18 percent of refugees citing the latter as the main obstacle. International law excludes those staying for economic reasons from asylum entitlements. Pakistan, urging international collaboration, emphasizes the need for economic opportunities in Afghanistan to incentivize returns. The Afghan government's distribution of land to returnees in 2005 aimed to address shelter issues, but challenges persist, particularly for those not belonging to specified provinces.

YEARLY VOLUNTARY REPATRIATION TRENDS (2002-2023)



*The figure refers to the number of refugees who were processed for Voluntary repatriation at VRCs in Pakistan. **The Baleli Verification Center serves all returnees from Balochistan, as well as refugees departing Karachi and returning to Afghanistan via Balochistan. The Azakhel Center in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa serves refugees returning from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Islamabad, Punjab, Sindh, and Pakistan Administered Kashmir. ***Exit interviews have been conducted with refugees in the Voluntary Repatriation Centers (VRCs).

Disclaimer: The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on the map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations. Dotted line represents approximately the Line of Control in Jammu and Kashmir by India and Pakistan. The final status of Jammu and Kashmir has not yet been agreed upon by the parties. Creation date: 13 November 2023 Data Sources: Afghan National Registration Database (ANR) - 2023; Exit Questionnaire Database. More information available on UNHCR's data portal, <https://data2.unhcr.org/en/country/pak>. Feedback: Information Management Unit at pakisim@unhcr.org

○ Security Nexus - Terrorism, Violence, and the Blame Game

Pakistan's recent call for the expulsion of undocumented migrants, primarily Afghan, stems from a surge in violence, linking Afghan Taliban support to Pakistan-based terrorism. The Afghan government rebukes this claim, denying its refugees' involvement in Pakistan's security issues. This echoes past repatriation efforts amid security concerns and raises questions about the effectiveness of such measures in the absence of broader international support.

○ Legal Perspectives - Navigating International Obligations

Examining the legal status of Afghan refugees under international law, questions arise about their entitlement to protection. The 1951 Refugee Convention, although not ratified by Pakistan, influences customary international law. The principle of non-refoulement, central to refugee protection, has complexities, especially in light of changing circumstances in Afghanistan. Reports from UN bodies indicate improving conditions, raising discussions on the continued justification for refugee status.

○ Deportation Dilemma - Striking a Balance in National Interests

Pakistan's decision to deport illegal immigrants, including Afghans, by November 1, 2023, confronts various categories of refugees. Understanding the distinctions among prima facie refugees, mandate refugees, illegal entrants, and foreigners is crucial. Balancing national sovereignty with humanitarian concerns, Pakistan faces challenges in implementing deportation while respecting legal frameworks and ensuring due process for different Afghan populations on its soil.

○ International Cooperation and Solutions- A Call for Collective Action

The international community's role in managing the Afghan refugee crisis is pivotal. As Pakistan grapples with the economic and security fallout, effective collaboration is necessary. Donor support, institutional assistance, and third-state settlement efforts can alleviate the burden. Creating special economic zones near the Afghan border offers a potential win-win, addressing economic insecurities, reducing urban pressures, and fostering communal harmony.

○ Charting a Path Forward

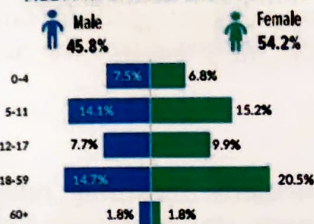
As Pakistan stands at the crossroads of addressing the Afghan refugee crisis, a comprehensive strategy is imperative. Balancing national security, legal obligations, and humanitarian concerns requires nuanced policymaking. The international community must fulfill its promises, acknowledging the shared responsibility in managing the crisis. The Afghan refugee conundrum demands collective engagement to ensure a sustainable and just resolution that respects the dignity and rights of all stakeholders involved.

ASSISTED REPATRIATION IN 2022

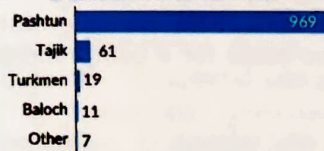
RVs Vs. OUTSIDE RVs



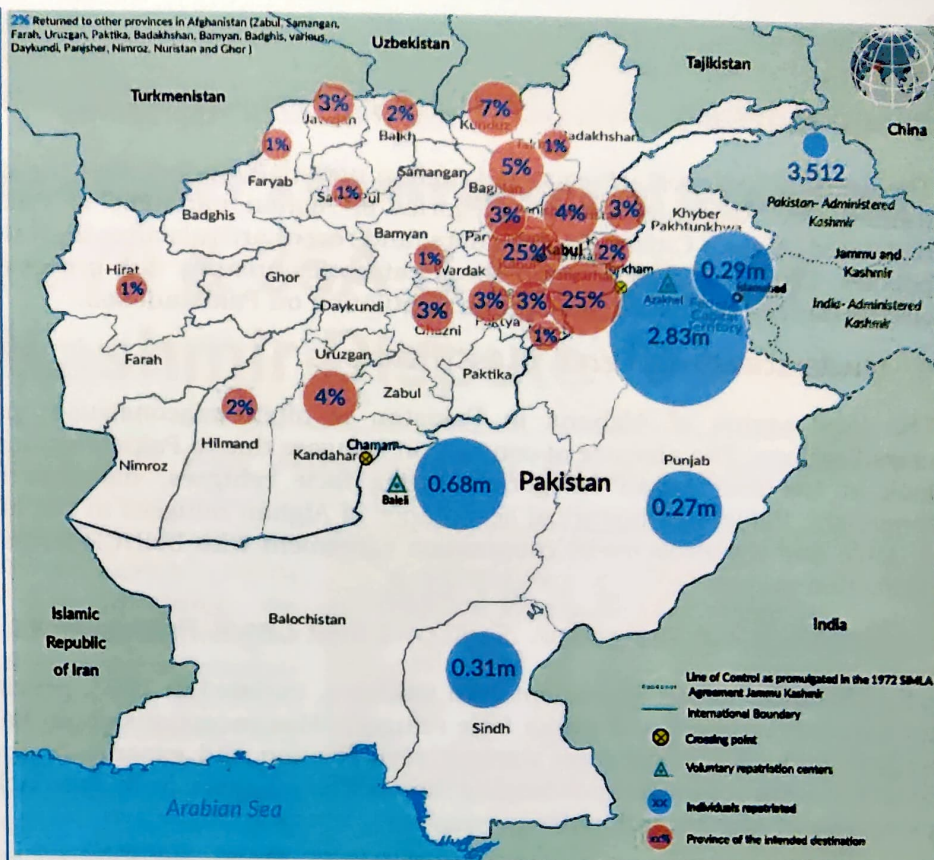
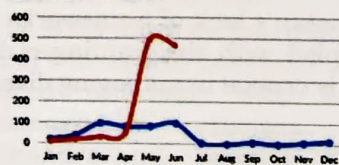
AGE AND GENDER COMPOSITION



BREAKDOWN BY ETHNICITY



MONTHLY VOLUNTARY REPATRIATION TRENDS (2021-2022)



The figures in this map reflect returns assisted through voluntary repatriation centers (VRCs) in Pakistan and the intended place of return in Afghanistan since 2002.

Afghan Refugees in Pakistan: A Comprehensive Legal Analysis

Afghan refugees have sought sanctuary in Pakistan for over four decades, portraying Pakistan as an admirable host. However, examining the justifiability of their refugee status under international law is critical. The 1951 convention and its 1967 protocol delineate the rights and duties of refugees, yet Pakistan's non-ratification demands an evaluation of customary international law. Article 1 defines a refugee, emphasizing the principle of non-refoulement in Article 33. Pakistan's evolving national challenges, encompassing security, economics, and politics, raise questions about its capacity to sustain this refugee burden.

Security Conditions and Legal Transition

As Afghanistan experiences increased stability, the justification for extending refugee protection to Afghan nationals in Pakistan becomes debatable. Reports from the UN Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute, the UNSC Monthly Forecast, and the UNSG/UNGA on Afghanistan highlight the changing landscape. The legal transition from refugee to migrant status hinges on the absence of circumstances mentioned in Article 1 of the convention, making a compelling case for Afghan refugees' return to their homeland.

Global Perspectives on Non-Refoulement and Security Challenges

While the non-refoulement principle has broad application beyond the 1951 convention, the aftermath of the 2001 U.S. terrorist attacks witnessed countries, including Australia, invoking 'national security' exceptions. This altered landscape questions the expansive protection offered to refugees. Pakistan's own national security, economic, and political crises further limit its ability to host millions of refugees, necessitating a re-evaluation of their entitlement to protection under international law.

Legal Responsibilities and the Afghan Government's Role

The Afghan government's responsibility in providing security, as outlined in the 1964 monarchy constitution, becomes pivotal in the absence of legal refugee protection. Statements from Abdul Hakeem Sharaee, the Taliban's acting minister of justice, affirm the adherence to the 1964 Afghan constitution.

With the cessation of legal refugee status, Afghan nationals may find themselves categorized as migrants, subject to the legal framework of the International Organization for Migration.

○ Administrative Framework and Nuanced Approaches

The decision to deport unregistered Afghan nationals underscores the need for nuanced administrative frameworks. Recognizing four categories of Afghan nationals in Pakistan—those born and raised, registered, Afghan Citizen Card holders, and recent arrivals after the Taliban takeover—calls for tailored policies. Differentiating between these categories ensures due process and acknowledges the diverse circumstances regulating the Afghan population on Pakistani soil.

○ Understanding Legal Classifications

The legal status of Afghans in Pakistan is often misconstrued, particularly regarding refugees' classifications. The absence of convention refugees due to Pakistan's non-party status prompts a closer look at the four broad categories—prima facie refugees, mandate refugees, illegal entrants, and foreigners. Pakistan's historical acceptance of Afghan refugees in the aftermath of the Saur revolution in 1978 and the subsequent cooperation agreement with UNHCR forms the basis for a comprehensive protection system.

○ Revitalizing Protection Systems and Legal Frameworks

UNHCR's cooperation agreement with Pakistan, initiated in 1993, provides a robust protection system for mandate refugees and prima facie refugees. Misconceptions about Pakistan's lack of frameworks for asylum seekers and refugees warrant revitalization and expansion, coupled with the training of key justice system actors. Acknowledging the need for a holistic legal approach is crucial in managing diverse categories of Afghan nationals.

○ Sovereign Rights and Immigration Laws

The 1971 Immigration Act in the UK and the 1946 Foreigners Act in Pakistan underscore sovereign rights to decide entry, stay, and departure of individuals. Pakistan's entitlement to ask illegal entrants to leave, coupled with the grace period for voluntary departure, aligns with immigration laws. The imperative for those fearing persecution in Afghanistan to apply for asylum through UNHCR emphasizes the balance between legal compliance, humanitarian considerations, and national interests.

○ Conclusion

Navigating the complex interplay of legal, economic, and security challenges, Pakistan faces critical decisions regarding the future of Afghan refugees on its soil. Striking a balance between humanitarian considerations and national interests remains a formidable task, necessitating careful legal, diplomatic, and socio-economic strategies. The nuanced understanding of legal classifications, administrative frameworks, and international obligations forms the basis for an informed and comprehensive approach to address the multifaceted issues surrounding Afghan refugees in Pakistan.



"A Dispute of EGOS of 1.5 Billion People"

**Indian Supreme Court's Controversial Decision:
Article 370 & 35A & Future of
Kashmir Dispute**

The Disputes is Yet Far Away from Being Settled

India's Supreme Court delivered a unanimous verdict on the special status of held Kashmir, ruling it a temporary provision and upholding the abrogation of Article 370 in the constitution. The court directed the election commission to conduct elections in held Kashmir by September 30, 2024. The 2019 move by the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) to revoke occupied Kashmir's special status faced criticism, with concerns raised about demographic changes. Chief Justice D.Y. Chandrachud, heading the five-member bench, stated that Article 370 was a temporary provision and not intended for disintegration, emphasizing Kashmir's integration into India. The court also endorsed the reorganization of Ladakh as a union territory and urged the restoration of held Kashmir to the same statehood as any other Indian state.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi welcomed the verdict, calling it a "beacon of hope," while opposition figures like Karan Singh and Shehbaz Sharif criticized the decision, alleging violations of international laws and a betrayal of Kashmiris. President Dr Arif Alvi expressed dismay, asserting that the judgment would strengthen Kashmiris' resolve against illegal occupation. Former chief minister Mehbooba Mufti condemned the decision, viewing it as a death sentence for Mahatma Gandhi's "idea of India." The court's announcement led to the house arrest of key petitioners Mufti and Omar Abdullah.

In response, President Alvi urged the international community to ensure India fulfills its pledges to the Kashmiri people. Shehbaz Sharif claimed the verdict recognized the "murder of justice," while Mufti encouraged Kashmiris not to lose hope, emphasizing that the decision doesn't determine their destiny. The former CM characterized the judgment as a defeat for India, breaking the unity that existed in 1947. The court's call for a truth and reconciliation commission to probe human rights violations since the 1980s reflects an acknowledgment of the region's turbulent history.

ARTICLE
370



Before	After
○ Article 370 accorded special status to J&K	➤ J&K will be like any other Indian state or union territory
○ J&K residents had dual citizenship of Kashmir and India	➤ J&K residents will have single citizenship of India
○ State Assembly tenure: 6 years	➤ Union Territory assembly tenure: 5 years
○ J&K had its own flag	➤ Indian national flag prevails
○ Centre's authority limited to external affairs, defence, finance, communication	➤ Centre responsible for administrative, local regulations also
○ State assembly defined 'permanent residents' of the state	➤ Kashmiris won't need permanent resident certificate
○ Non-residents of J&K could not permanently settle in the state	➤ Any Indian can settle in Kashmir
○ Non-residents could not buy immovable property, acquire land	➤ Anyone can buy property, land in Kashmir
○ Kashmiri women married to non-Kashmiri could not inherit property	➤ Kashmiri women married to non-Kashmiri can inherit property

➤ Unravelling the Complexities of the Decision

○ Introduction: A Historical Unveiling

The Kashmir conflict, deeply rooted in historical complexities, has been a contentious issue for decades. Recent events, particularly India's top court validating the revocation of Article 370, have intensified the geopolitical landscape and heightened tensions. This article delves into the multifaceted dimensions of the Kashmir conflict, analyzing the implications of the court's decision on the region, its people, and the international stage.

○ The Annexation of Kashmir: A Dubious Legality

The court's unanimous decision, validating the Modi government's 2019 action to strip India-occupied Kashmir of its semi-autonomous status, marks a significant turning point. Termed as historic by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the move formalized the annexation of the disputed territory. However, the court's verdict, hailed by the government, has raised concerns about the legality of such a drastic constitutional change.

○ Demographic Shifts: The Ongoing Transformation

The court's decision not only upheld the revocation of Article 370 but also endorsed the abrogation of Article 35-A, which protected Kashmir's demography. The Modi government's alteration of domicile rules has allowed hundreds of thousands from mainland India to acquire Kashmiri domicile certificates, unsettling the demographic balance in the Muslim-majority region. This shift carries implications for the electoral landscape and has deepened the alienation of Kashmiri political parties.

○ Kashmiri Resistance: A Long War for Freedom

In the aftermath of the annexation, Kashmir witnessed widespread protests, met with brutal military action. Despite the suppression, Kashmiris remain steadfast in their struggle for freedom. The court's validation of the government's actions is perceived as a blow to their aspirations, further intensifying their resolve. The conflict is far from subsiding, and the draconian measures imposed by India are likely to strengthen Kashmiri determination.



○ Political Fallout: The Fractured Alliances in Kashmir

The court's decision has left New Delhi with no allies in Kashmir. Even political leaders who were traditionally open to working with the Indian government under an autonomous framework have been alienated. Figures like Omar Abdullah and Mehbooba Mufti, former chief ministers, have vowed to continue the struggle, highlighting the political vacuum created by the court's endorsement of the annexation.

○ International Implications: A Closed Door for Dialogue

The court's order not only has domestic repercussions but also closes the door for any meaningful dialogue between Pakistan and India. Geopolitically, this decision adds another layer of complexity to the already strained relations between the two nuclear-armed neighbors. Pakistan's options are limited, and the international community's response becomes crucial in shaping the future trajectory of the Kashmir conflict.

○ India's Political Landscape: A Boost for Hindu Nationalism

The court's decision is seen as a victory for the governing Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). The validation of the government's actions provides a political boost on the eve of general elections. This raises concerns about the rise of ultra-right nationalist Hindutva ideologies and the potential implications for India's diverse social fabric.

○ International Response: Pakistan's Rejection and China's Call for Peace

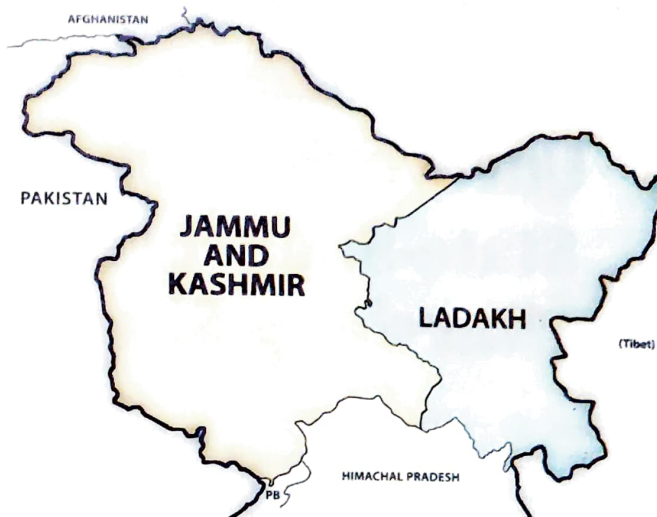
Pakistan categorically rejects the court's verdict, emphasizing the internationally recognized status of Jammu and Kashmir as a dispute. China, reacting strongly, calls for a peaceful settlement based on UN resolutions, the UN Charter, and relevant bilateral agreements. The international community's response becomes crucial in ensuring a peaceful resolution to the longstanding conflict.

○ UN Concerns: A Call for Restraint

The United Nations, historically concerned about the Kashmir issue, expresses renewed worry. The Secretary-General urges restraint and emphasizes the need for dialogue between India and Pakistan. The UN's continued interest in the region underscores the global significance of the Kashmir conflict.

○ Conclusion: Navigating a Complex Future

As the Kashmir conflict unfolds, the court's decision adds new layers of complexity. The demographic shifts, political fallout, and international implications underscore the intricate nature of this longstanding dispute. The future remains uncertain, requiring careful navigation to address the aspirations of the Kashmiri people and ensure regional stability.





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~ Deep State Working Beyond National Borders ~

Unravelling the Intricacies of Indian State-Sponsored Terrorism vis-a-vis Hardeep Singh Nijjar Killing Incident

In recent times, the world has been witness to a disturbing international incident that has strained diplomatic relations and raised questions about state-sponsored terrorism. The killing of Hardeep Singh Nijjar, a prominent Sikh leader and Canadian citizen, on Canadian soil has exposed a deeper and more intricate web of global politics and covert operations. This alarming event has triggered a cascade of consequences, leading to a growing schism between India and Canada, and unveiling the global reach of India's intelligence agency, the Research and Analysis Wing (RAW). As we delve into the complexities surrounding this incident, it is crucial to analyze the multifaceted dimensions of this case, from the geopolitical implications to the implications for international stability.

HISTORY

Sikh independence movement



15th century

Sikhism founded by Guru Nanak Dev Ji



1675

Guru Gobind Singh installed as leader of Sikh faith



1947

Partition of India



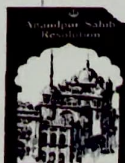
1948

Tara Singh calls for establishment of a Punjabi-speaking autonomous Sikh state



1970s

The Sikh independence movement gains momentum among Sikhs in India and abroad



1973

The Anandpur Sahib Resolution calls for greater autonomy from the central government for states including Punjab



June 7-10, 1984

Indian forces storm the Golden Temple, Sikhism's holiest site, to flush out separatists who had taken refuge there



October 31, 1984

Then-Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, who had ordered the raid on the temple, was assassinated by two of her Sikh bodyguards



June 23, 1985

A bomb explodes on Air India Flight 182, killing all 329 people on board. Authorities attribute the bombing to Sikh separatists based in Canada

Today

According to the 2011 census, 20.8 million Sikhs live in India and make up 1.7 percent of the population



➤ The Genesis of Tension: Canada's Accusations Against India

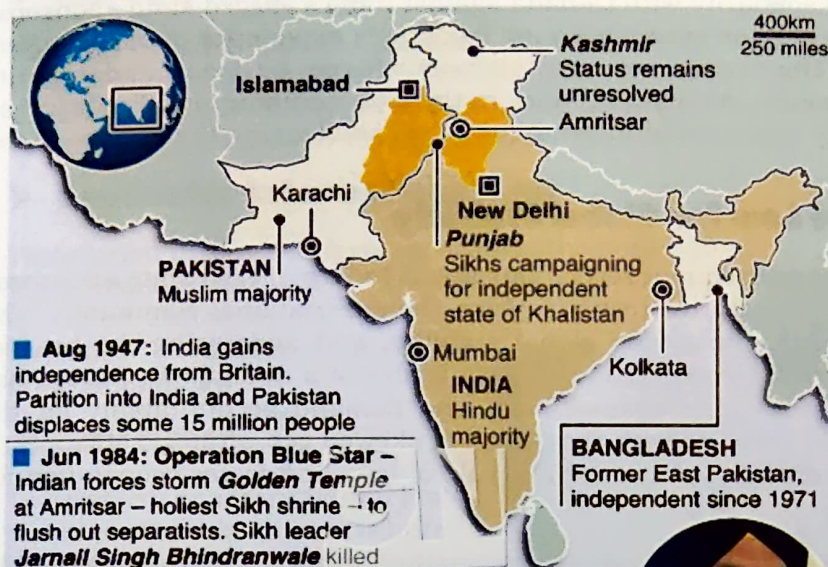
The tension between India and Canada escalated when Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau revealed credible allegations linking agents of the Indian government to the assassination of Hardeep Singh Nijjar. Trudeau emphasized Canada's commitment to the rule of law and protection of its citizens, leading to the expulsion of top Indian diplomats and a halt in trade talks. This revelation shed light on India's covert operations beyond its borders, raising concerns about the role of RAW in orchestrating targeted killings and interfering in foreign affairs.

➤ Global Outcry: The International Community Reacts

The global community responded with concern and condemnation as the allegations unfolded. Key players, including the intelligence agencies of Canada, Britain, Australia, New Zealand, and the United States, coordinated efforts to investigate India's involvement. The White House called for a transparent and comprehensive investigation, emphasizing the seriousness of the matter. The incident not only strained India-Canada relations but also jeopardized India's standing in international forums, potentially impacting its participation in the G-7 summit and tarnishing its image on the global stage.

➤ A Historical Perspective: India's Deep State and Covert Operations

Row over Sikh leader's murder



To understand the roots of India's alleged state-sponsored terrorism, one must delve into its historical context. India, presenting itself as the world's largest democracy, has faced accusations of suppressing dissent, curbing media freedom, and supporting terrorism in foreign countries. The deep state, under the guise of Hindu nationalism, has infiltrated various facets of Indian society, leading to internal conflicts and targeting minority groups, particularly Sikhs advocating for Khalistan. India's interventionist history, including its role in the breakup of Pakistan in 1971, reflects a pattern of asserting regional power through covert means.

➤ Challenges on the Sikh Road to Khalistan: A Struggle for Independence

The assassination of Hardeep Singh Nijjar is not an isolated incident but part of a broader challenge faced by the Sikh community in their pursuit of an independent state, Khalistan. The roots of this movement trace back to the Sikh kingdom of Maharaja Ranjeet Singh and its dismantling by the British. The Sikh diaspora, spread across the globe, seeks international recognition and support for their right to self-determination. The ongoing struggle raises questions about how long India can resist the demand for a unified Punjab under Sikh rule

and whether Pakistan should acknowledge the Sikh demand for Khalistan.

➤ RAW's Global Reach: A Threat to International Stability

The killing of Hardeep Singh Nijjar has brought India's intelligence agency, RAW, into the spotlight, revealing its alleged global reach and involvement in targeted assassinations. Reports indicate a broader agenda of planning assassinations targeting Sikh and Kashmiri activists residing in foreign countries. The international community, particularly the Five Eyes alliance, comprising the USA, UK, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand, has pointed to India's involvement in Nijjar's murder, branding RAW as a sponsor of terrorism. This not only raises concerns about individual safety but also poses a significant threat to global stability.

➤ India's Double Standards: Accusations Against Pakistan and the Fallout

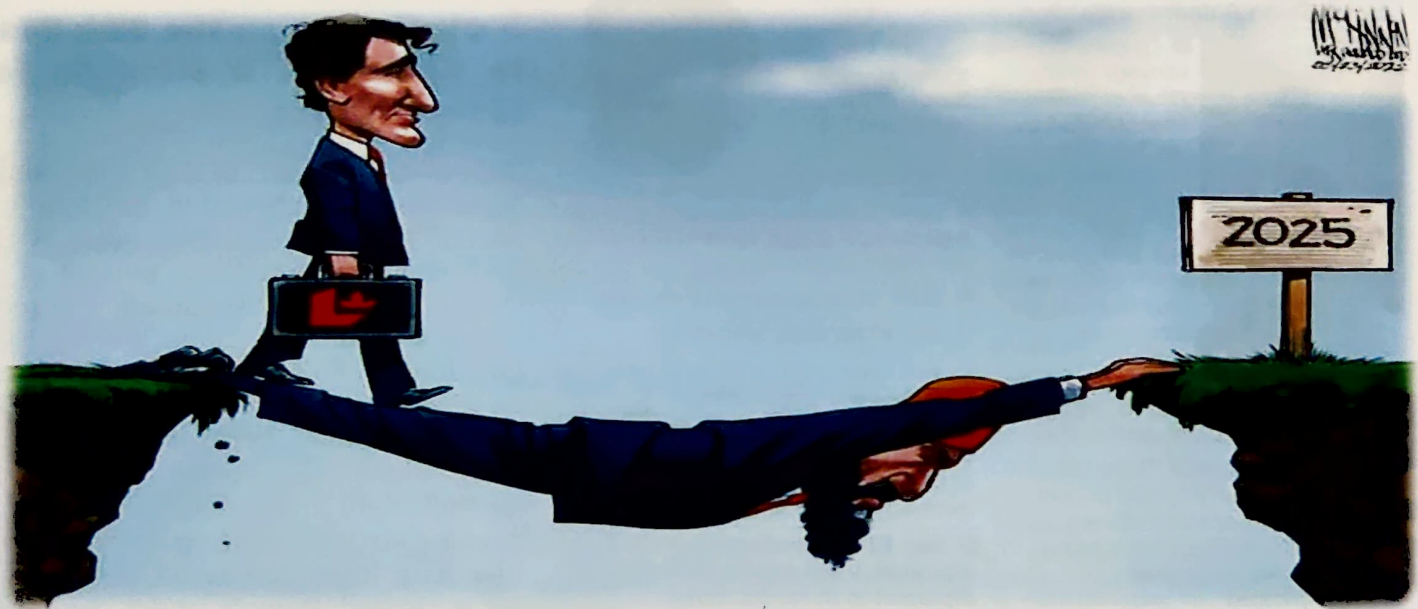
While India faces allegations of state-sponsored terrorism, it has consistently accused Pakistan of similar activities. The arrest of Indian spy Kulbhushan Jadhav and revelations about Indian involvement in terrorist activities within Pakistan underscore the extent of India's alleged interference. The international community's scrutiny, compounded by the accusations from the Five Eyes, challenges India's credibility as a responsible state actor. This double standard of accusing others while engaging in covert actions raises questions about India's reliability as a strategic partner.

➤ Pakistan's Support for Canada: A Shared Experience of State-Sponsored Terrorism

In this global context, Pakistan stands in solidarity with Canada against India's alleged state-sponsored terrorism. Trudeau's exposure of India's actions resonates with Pakistan's experience of facing covert operations from its eastern neighbor. The West's selective support, driven by trade and security interests, places Canada in a delicate position. As a strong voice in the global community, Trudeau has the opportunity to demand accountability and uphold international law, challenging the failures of the existing economic system.

➤ Conclusion: Upholding Rule of Law for Global Stability

The killing of Hardeep Singh Nijjar and the subsequent revelations about India's alleged state-sponsored terrorism demand a comprehensive and cooperative response from the international community. The urgency lies in protecting individual rights, preserving global stability, and addressing the broader implications of unchecked state-sponsored violence. Trudeau, as a leader of a developed country, has the responsibility to advocate for strict sanctions against Modi and demand accountability for the violation of international law. As the world grapples with the fallout of skewed geo-strategic alliances, it is essential to reevaluate the global economic system, prioritize rule of law, and foster cooperation for sustainable international relations.



Legal Aspect of the Scenario

On September 18, 2023, Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau addressed the Canadian Parliament, asserting that Ottawa was actively pursuing "credible allegations" from Canadian intelligence against New Delhi. The accusations implicated India in the assassination of Sikh Canadian leader Hardeep Singh Nijjar on Canadian soil in June of the same year. Nijjar was fatally shot by two individuals wearing dark clothes and hoods outside a Sikh temple in a Vancouver suburb on June 18, 2023. Subsequent to Trudeau's statement, Canada expelled an Indian diplomat, leading to heightened tensions. In response, India denied the allegations, urging Trudeau to take action against perceived "anti-India elements" within Canada and reciprocating by ordering a senior Canadian diplomat to leave the country.

➤ Background to the Dispute

Canada harbors the world's largest Sikh population outside India, constituting approximately 770,000 people, or 2.1% of the country's population. Tensions between Indian and Canadian officials surfaced in 2015 when Trudeau, upon assuming power, appointed four Sikh ministers to his 30-member cabinet. Previous concerns raised by Indian diplomats revolved around Sikh Canadians supporting the Khalistan movement, advocating for a separatist Sikh homeland in India. Acts of vandalism, such as the defacement of a Hindu temple, and local referendums on Sikh independence have fueled diplomatic

strains. Despite Trudeau's assurance in 2018 that Canada would not endorse a revival of a separatist movement in India, he emphasized respect for the right to free speech and assembly.

➤ Hardeep Singh Nijjar – A Controversial Figure

Hardeep Singh Nijjar, a Canadian Sikh separatist leader associated with the Khalistan movement, resided in British Columbia. While labeled a terrorist by India and accused of masterminding the banned Khalistan Tiger Force, Nijjar's supporters portrayed him as a peaceful advocate for Sikh independence in British Columbia who deeply cared for his community.

➤ Applicable International Law

The current discussion revolves around the possibility of India conducting an extrajudicial killing on Canadian soil and explores Canada's options under international law.

○ Attribution

To establish an international law violation, Canada must attribute the wrongful act to the Indian state. This necessitates demonstrating a "complete dependence" and control of the private actor by the state. Clear connecting the Indian government to assassination is crucial, with principles, such as those outlined in Articles on State Responsibility, playing



evidence Nijjar's international law the International Law Commission's a pivotal role.

○ Admissibility of Evidence

An additional concern is the legality of evidence obtained from intelligence sources. Speculation suggests Canada relies on intelligence gathering, yet the government has not disclosed the evidence or its sources. While states are generally not legally obliged to reveal such evidence, non-disclosure may impact the case in a court of law.

➤ International Law Options Available to Canada

If Canada can attribute India's actions to Nijjar's murder, several international law instruments become relevant.

○ UN Charter

Article 2(4) of the United Nations Charter prohibits states from interfering with the territorial integrity or political independence of other states. The involvement of Indian state actors in killing Canadian citizens on Canadian soil would be a severe violation of sovereignty, potentially justifying measures under the 'Right to Individual or Collective Self-Defence' (Article 51 of the UN Charter).

○ International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights

If Canada's allegations are true, India may be accused of breaching Nijjar's right to life under Article 6 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, to which both countries are signatories.

○ Extradition

Canada could pursue criminal responsibility under its domestic criminal law for suspects involved in Nijjar's killing. However, extradition may prove challenging, given historical instances where Canada turned down Indian requests.

○ International Court of Justice

Recourse to the International Court of Justice may be challenging, as its jurisdiction is consent-based. Cooperation from India is uncertain.

➤ Canada's Position

The current dispute can be viewed through the lenses of sovereignty and the human rights framework. Prime Minister Trudeau emphasized Canada as a rule-of-law country, with protection of citizens and defense of sovereignty being fundamental priorities. He accused India of violating Canada's sovereignty but did not explicitly reference the international human rights framework. This focus on sovereignty potentially neglects the individual's right to life.



➤ India's Possible Defense

India may assert the 'Right to Individual Self-Defence,' arguing that harboring separatist entities in Canada infringes on its territorial and political integrity. While typically applicable in times of active war, the concept of preemptive self-defense may be invoked, though its legitimacy is questioned.

➤ The Way Forward

International law options for Canada are limited, necessitating a political resolution. The international community's involvement will be influenced by individual states' relationships with India and Canada and their historical stances on targeted killings. The resolution will impact global principles of sovereignty and human rights. Canada pursuing the case in an international forum, such as the ICJ, could set a legal precedent discouraging similar conduct by other states.



Pakistan's SPUTNIK Movement

Paving the Path for Pakistan's Space Aspirations

~ ~ ~ ~ A Response to Chandryan-3

➤ India's Lunar Success and Pakistan's Reaction

India recently achieved the remarkable feat of successfully landing on the moon, becoming the fourth country to do so. The event, taking place approximately 400,000 kilometers away from Earth, stands as a testament to impressive engineering and scientific accomplishments. In response, various reactions surfaced in Pakistan, ranging from skepticism about the authenticity of the landing to concerns about the funds allocated to the space program. While some criticize the allocation of resources, it's crucial to note that India's space program operates at a notably low cost.

➤ Reflecting on Suparco's Challenges

A prevalent sentiment in Pakistan is one of regret regarding the state of its own space agency, the Pakistan Space and Upper Atmosphere Research Commission (Suparco). Memes circulated comparing the qualifications of the heads of the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) with those of Suparco, emphasizing a need for improvement. Interestingly, Pakistan was an early entrant into the space age, with Suparco founded in 1961 under the guidance of Nobel laureate Professor Abdus Salam.

➤ India's Success Sparks Self-Reflection in Pakistan

India's successful Chandrayaan-3 mission prompts self-reflection in Pakistan, questioning the reasons behind the country's space program falling short of its early ambitions. Despite challenges in various sectors, the public response to Chandrayaan-3 indicates a lingering interest in space exploration, providing a potential foundation for future endeavors.

➤ Rediscovering Curiosity: A Collective Call to Action

Addressing the shortcomings in scientific and educational institutions, there's a call for collective curiosity. Encouraging individuals to ask questions and explore the wonders of space, the focus is on rekindling innate

Facts & Figures


CHANDRAYAAN-3

India's Chandrayaan 3 mission carries a lander and rover with scientific payloads to analyse the chemical and geological composition of the lunar surface.

14 JULY 2023

2:35 P.M

LAUNCH TIME



VIKRAM LUNAR LANDER

LAUNCH VEHICLE
GSLV-MkIII

DESTINATION
Moon-South Polar Region

LAUNCHING FROM
Satish Dhawan Space Centre

MISSION LIFE
One lunar day, which is equivalent to about 14 Earth days

MASS
3900 Kg

MISSION COMPONENTS
Propulsion Module
Vikram Lander
Pragyan Rover



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curiosity, especially among the youth. The emphasis is on making a deliberate effort to seek answers, involving younger generations in the process.

➤ The Historical Context of Pakistan's Space Program

Pakistan's early engagement in the space age, marked by rocket launches in the 1960s, set the stage for potential success. However, a shift in the 1970s and 1980s toward nuclear pursuits redirected focus and funding away from the space program. Suparco, once flourishing, experienced neglect and defunding, with an emphasis on military applications of space technology.

➤ Reviving Pakistan's Space Program: Challenges and Opportunities

Despite the challenges, reviving Pakistan's space program is deemed essential. Addressing concerns about investing in space while poverty persists, the article argues that an effective space program is not a luxury but a necessity. Learning from India's cost-effective model, Pakistan can leverage space technology for economic growth.

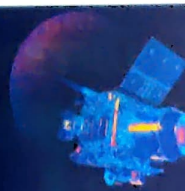
➤ Strategies for Revitalization: Vision, Collaborations, and Public Engagement

The article proposes three key elements for revitalizing Pakistan's space program:

- ✓ **Vision and Consistency:** Advocating for meaningful, consistent efforts over time, the article highlights the importance of setting achievable goals that inspire. It discusses the significance of Pakistan's Space Vision-2047 and the need for a balance between lofty aspirations and realistic achievements.
- ✓ **International and Private Collaborations:** Emphasizing collaboration with countries like China and exploring partnerships beyond, the article encourages leveraging Pakistan's strengths, especially in engineering and IT. It cites examples of collaborations such as the cubesat ICUBE-Q on China's mission and the potential for involvement in space start-ups.
- ✓ **Space in the Public Sphere:** Recognizing the power of awe and wonder, the article underscores the importance of public engagement in space. It suggests the establishment of modern planetariums across major cities, akin to successful models in India and other countries. Additionally, the potential for dedicated science and space shows on television is highlighted.

➤ Looking to the Future


While acknowledging past challenges and skepticism, the analysis expresses hope that the current moment could be a turning point for Pakistan's space aspirations. Despite uncertainties, the call is for collective efforts, drawing inspiration from historic achievements and aiming for a brighter future in space exploration.



Chandrayaan-3

Facts and Figures

Chandrayaan-3, which means "moon vehicle" in Sanskrit, consists of a Lander module (LM), Propulsion module (PM) and a rover. The follow-on mission to Chandrayaan-2 will demonstrate end-to-end capability in safe landing and roving on the lunar surface.

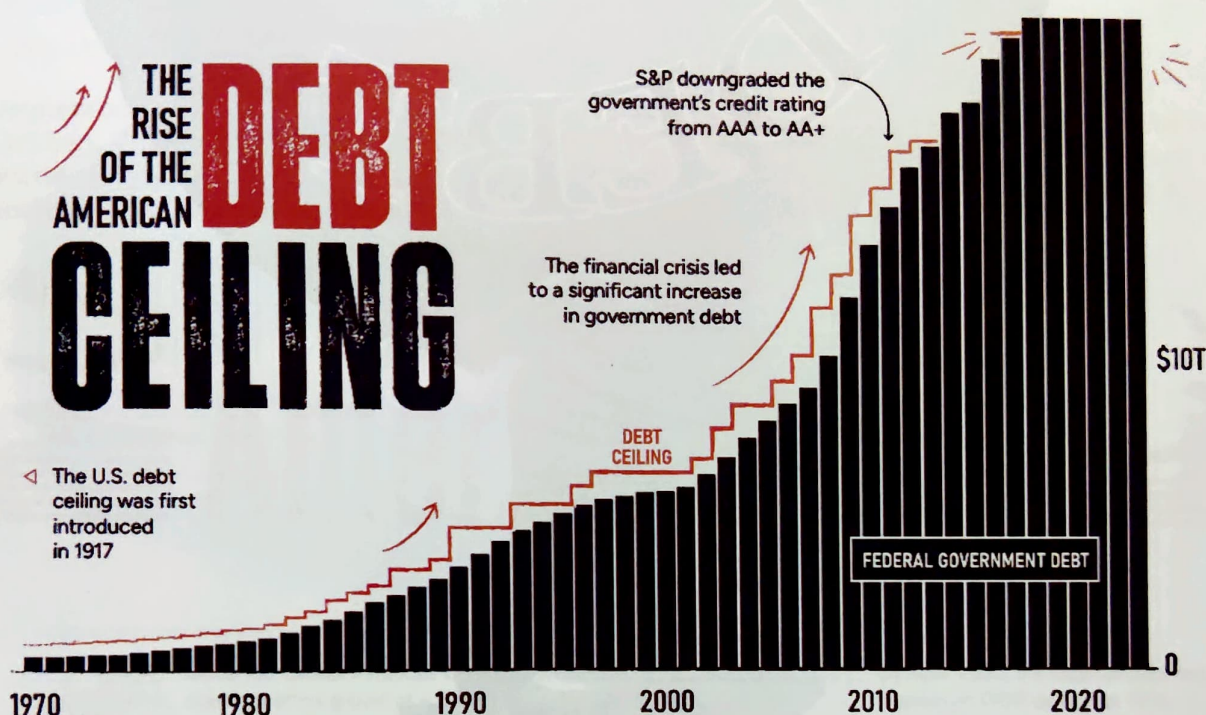


- **Launch Date**
July 14
- **Landing Site**
Moon
South Polar Region
- **Mission Life**
1 lunar daylight period
or roughly 14 earth
days
- **Mission Components**
 - Propulsion Module
 - Lander
 - Rover
- **Launch Vehicle**
GSLV-Mk III
- **Mass**
3900 Kg

Trapper Got Trapped - - - Global Impacts of Economic Collapse

The U.S. Debt Ceiling:

Navigating History, Controversies & Economic Consequences



➤ Introduction: Unveiling the Debt Ceiling

The debt ceiling, established in 1917 during World War I, acts as a crucial cap on the U.S. government's cumulative borrowing through bond issuances. As the nation's debt approaches this limit, the Treasury Department resorts to extraordinary measures to meet obligations, aiming to prevent a catastrophic default. Showdowns over the debt ceiling have sparked conflicts between the White House and Congress, leading to government shutdowns. This article explores the debt ceiling's definition, history, advantages, disadvantages, and recent clashes, shedding light on its impact on the U.S. economy.

➤ Understanding the Debt Ceiling's Origins and Controversies

Before the debt ceiling's inception, Congress held unrestricted control over the nation's finances. Created in 1917 to instill fiscal responsibility during World War I, the debt ceiling has been periodically raised to avoid default risks. However, debates persist on its constitutionality, with critics pointing to the 14th Amendment, questioning the need for such limits. The United States stands as an exception among democratic nations, with most countries lacking a debt ceiling.

➤ Advantages and Disadvantages of the Debt Ceiling

○ Advantages: Upholding Fiscal Responsibility

The debt ceiling serves as a practical tool to streamline the nation's finances, allowing the Treasury to issue bonds efficiently without constant congressional approval. By setting boundaries, it expedites

monetary approval processes, providing a structured framework for financial operations. Raising the debt ceiling enables continued funding for federal operations and essential social programs like Social Security and Medicare, pivotal for retirees and qualifying recipients.

○ Disadvantages: The Fluid Nature and Controversy

Despite its advantages, the debt ceiling's fluid nature raises concerns about its effectiveness in ensuring fiscal responsibility. Record-high debt levels over the years prompt questions about its efficacy. Elevating the debt ceiling negatively impacts the country's credit rating and increases overall debt costs. The constitutional debate persists, with critics arguing that the debt ceiling contradicts the 14th Amendment, potentially hindering the government's ability to meet financial obligations.



➤ Debt Ceiling Showdowns and Historical Impact

Throughout history, debt ceiling showdowns have triggered government shutdowns, exemplified by the 1995 conflict between President Bill Clinton and Congress. In 2023, House Speaker Kevin McCarthy's election raised concerns about potential defaults, highlighting the recurring nature of debt ceiling debates. Notably, Fitch Ratings downgraded the U.S. credit rating in August 2023, citing rising national debt and potential financial deterioration as key factors.

○ Debt Ceiling Dynamics during Obama and Trump Administrations

Both President Barack Obama and President Donald Trump faced debt ceiling challenges. The 2011 debt ceiling crisis resulted in Standard & Poor's downgrading the U.S. credit rating. The 2013 government shutdown, triggered by attempts to defund the Affordable Care Act, was swiftly resolved with a debt limit suspension. The debt ceiling saw repeated adjustments, with Trump's Bipartisan Budget Act of 2019 suspending it through July 2021, averting default risks.

○ House Speaker McCarthy's Impact on Debt Ceiling

In 2023, concerns arose with House Speaker McCarthy's potential influence on the debt ceiling, signaling a push for deep spending cuts. The fear of political gridlock loomed, threatening financial stability ahead of the new fiscal year. Economists projected a 60% chance of an 11th-hour deal, emphasizing macroeconomic uncertainty.

o Economic Ramifications of U.S. Debt Default

A U.S. default on government debt would reverberate globally, impacting financial markets and confidence in U.S. borrowers. Moody's Analytics projected a four-month default to shave 4% off GDP, reduce stock prices by a third, and lead to substantial job cuts. The aftermath could mirror the Great Recession, causing economic uncertainty and hindering critical government functions.

o Yellen's Warning and Ongoing Political Compromises

In mid-January 2023, Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen emphasized the urgency of raising the debt ceiling to prevent irreparable harm to the U.S. economy. Despite ongoing political brinkmanship, historical trends suggest last-minute compromises. President Biden's successful negotiations in 2021, including the \$1.2 trillion infrastructure package, demonstrated the ability to avert default and reach bipartisan agreements.

o Current Debt Ceiling Status and Frequency of Adjustments

As of September 2023, the national debt stands at \$33.1 trillion, surpassing the raised debt ceiling of \$31.4 trillion. The debt ceiling has been adjusted 78 times since 1960, reflecting the recurring need for modifications. Questions about the ceiling's effectiveness persist, emphasizing the ongoing reliance on this mechanism to manage the nation's finances.

Why America's Debt doesn't stop growing

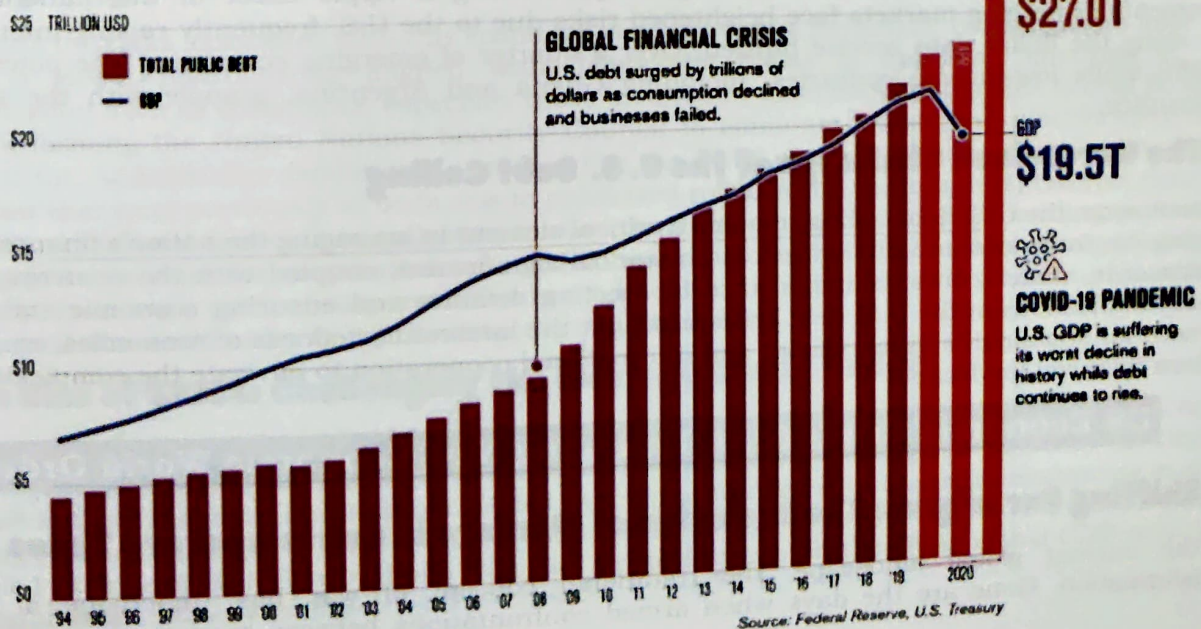


Since the Global Financial Crisis, America's national debt has often grown at a faster rate than GDP.

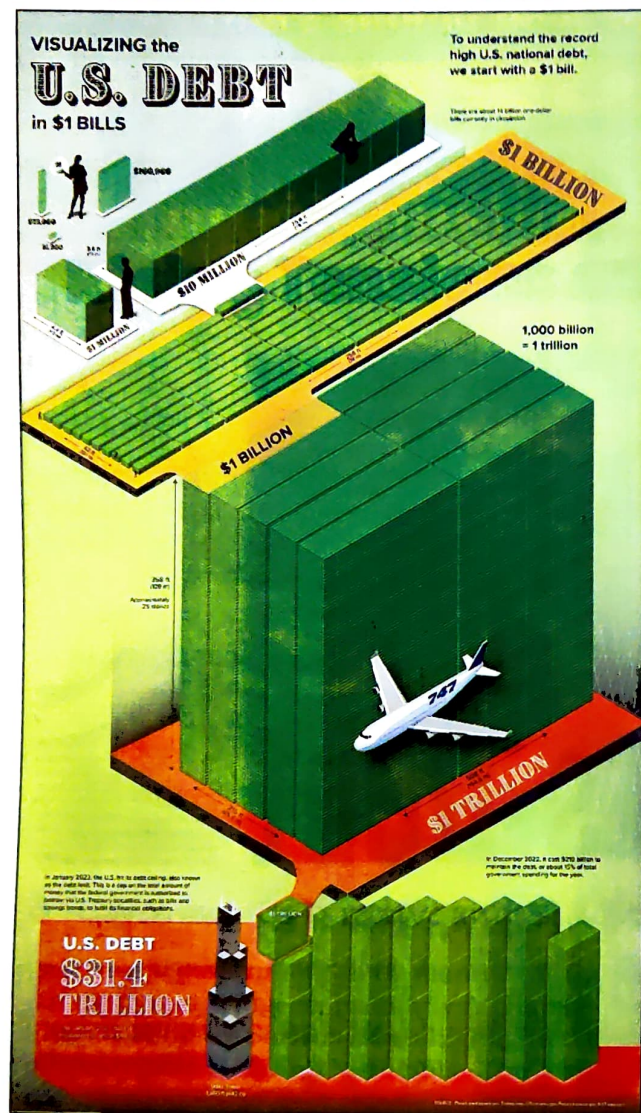


By April 2020, the national debt had surpassed GDP by almost 18%.

U.S. TOTAL PUBLIC DEBT VS GDP



The U.S. Debt Crisis and Its Global Implications



The U.S. debt crisis, exacerbated by continuous increases in the debt ceiling, poses a persistent challenge for the American government and global investors. The debt has soared to \$33.67 trillion, projected to exceed \$50 trillion by 2030. Fiscal deficits stemming from significant stimulus measures, increased healthcare costs, and persistent trade deficits contribute to this alarming trend.

➤ Challenges to Dollar Hegemony and Global Repercussions

The U.S. debt crisis challenges the longstanding "exorbitant privilege" associated with the dollar. Continuous debt increases have led to downgrades by major credit rating agencies, eroding global confidence in U.S. Treasuries. The politicization of sanctions further complicates matters, with multiple countries, including China and Japan, divesting from U.S. Treasuries, creating a potential supply-demand gap.

➤ Interest Rate Hikes, Fiscal Risks, and Federal Reserve's Dilemma

The Federal Reserve's consecutive interest rate hikes contribute to rising U.S. debt interest and costs. High interest rates have a noticeable impact on the fiscal situation, with net interest costs reaching \$659 billion for the fiscal year 2023. As rates continue to rise, sustaining the debt becomes challenging, potentially leading to a snowball effect with increasing fiscal risks.

➤ Global Economic Ramifications and Emerging Market Challenges

The U.S. debt ceiling's impact extends globally, creating a ripple effect in international capital movements. Emerging markets face heightened risks due to the U.S. frequently raising interest rates, increasing the dollar debt service burden. Over a quarter of emerging economies face potential debt default, while low-income countries, including Ghana and Argentina, grapple with the specter of bankruptcy.

➤ The Unresolved Challenge of the U. S. Debt Ceiling

In conclusion, the U.S. debt ceiling remains a critical element in managing the nation's finances, despite ongoing controversies and challenges. Its historical significance, coupled with the recurring need for adjustments, underscores its importance in averting defaults and ensuring economic stability. The global ramifications of the U.S. debt crisis highlight the interconnectedness of economies, emphasizing the need for sustainable fiscal policies and international cooperation to navigate the complexities of the modern financial landscape.

US Economic Crisis & An Emerging New Economic World Order

➤ Shifting Paradigms: The Evolution of Warfare in Contemporary Times

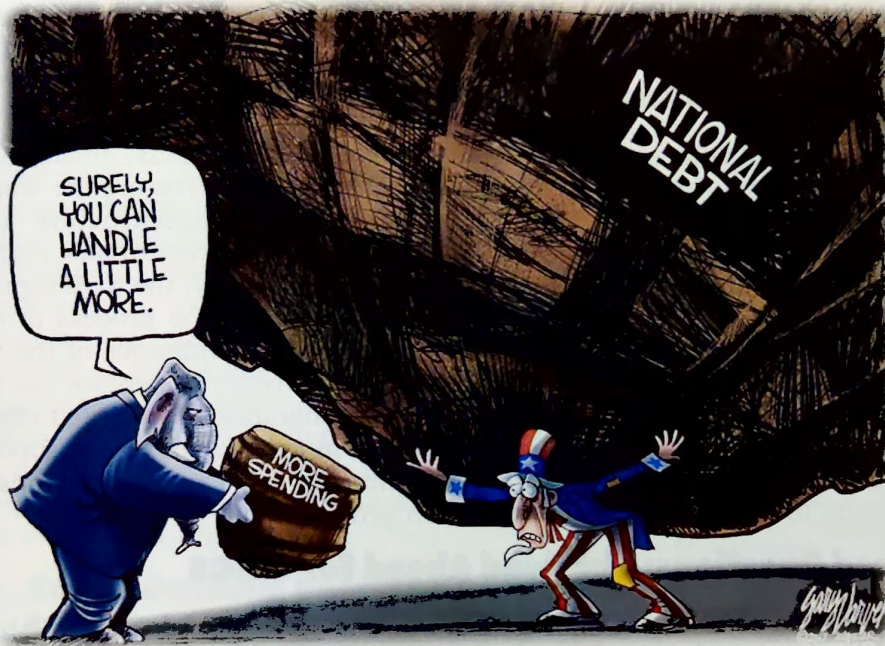
In the current global landscape, the traditional concept of war has undergone a profound transformation. Gone are the days when armed confrontations between rival armies solely defined

warfare. The contemporary focus has shifted dramatically towards economic battlegrounds, making it evident that the race for economic supremacy is the new world order. The sway over the global economy has become synonymous with dictating international influence, marking a significant departure from historical norms.

➤ **Rationale Behind the Economic Warfare Paradigm**

Several factors contribute to this shift. The looming threat of nuclear war has effectively diminished the viability of traditional armed conflicts. The astronomical human and economic costs associated with physical warfare have paved the way for a more strategic and effective approach to addressing external threats. In this context, the importance of economic standing cannot be overstated. Every sector's progress and development, including military prowess, are intricately linked to economic stability, providing a logical foundation for the evolution of warfare paradigms.

➤ **Contemporary Manifestations of Economic Warfare**



The manifestations of this evolving warfare paradigm are evident in recent global events. The trade war between the United States and China, worldwide economic sanctions on Iran, attempts to undermine the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), and NATO member states' responses to Russia's military interventions all showcase the economic underpinnings of modern conflicts. Furthermore, the politicization of institutions like the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) and biased practices of international financial institutions serve as validation for the emergence of new battlefields.

➤ **Mitigating the Threat: Bold Steps Towards a New World Order**

To mitigate the risks associated with this economic-centric warfare paradigm, bold steps are imperative. Firstly, a global restructuring aligned with democratic ideals is essential, ensuring equitable representation from all continents, especially those historically sidelined, such as the Global South and Africa. Reforming the United Nations Security Council to eliminate biases and bloc formations is a critical move. Additionally, depoliticizing entities like the FATF can foster cooperation among regional economies that were previously at odds due to politicized roles. World leaders must redirect their focus from narrow national interests to collective human development initiatives. Dismantling protectionist policies opens avenues for cooperation among nations, replacing hostility with mutual collaboration. Ultimately, fostering a spirit of cooperation rather than cutthroat competition is paramount in achieving the lofty goal of a world order that prioritizes the well-being of all.

➤ **The Rise of BRICS: Challenging the Western World Order**

In an era defined by the ascendancy of developing economies in the Global South, the BRICS coalition has emerged as a formidable challenger to the Western world order, predominantly led by the USA. The economic and political repercussions of USA-led sanctions, coupled with unmet commitments in climate financing and health and food security, have disillusioned many developing states. This disenchantment has fueled the rise of BRICS, a coalition that has already surpassed the G7 in global GDP ratio and is projected to reach 50% by 2030.

➤ **BRICS' Call for a New World Order: Reshaping International Institutions**

BRICS nations advocate for a more equitable world order by reforming established international institutions dominated by the West. The adoption of the resolution 'Towards a New International Economic Order' by the United Nations General Assembly in December 2022, with 123 votes in favor, underscores the momentum behind this call for change. However, questions linger regarding the intentions of countries like Saudi Arabia and the UAE—whether they seek an erosion of the existing Western order or prefer maintaining the status quo. Political tensions between India and China pose challenges, with India expressing reluctance towards BRICS expansion, fearing it might become a mouthpiece for China. India's pivotal role in the India-Middle East-Europe Corridor further complicates BRICS' future, as it aims to counterbalance China's influence through initiatives like the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI).



➤ **BRICS' Institutional Reforms: A Challenge to Western Dominance**

Discontented BRICS states have made significant strides in reshaping global institutions, challenging Western dominance. The establishment of the National Development Bank (NDB), mirroring the World Bank's model, is a noteworthy development. The NDB's focus on financing infrastructure and development projects, free from stringent conditions imposed by traditional financial institutions, marks a departure from the status quo. With approved funds for sustainable projects globally, the NDB signals a shift towards a more inclusive and cooperative financial landscape. Moreover, the process of de-dollarization initiated by BRICS poses a substantial threat to the longstanding dominance of the US dollar. The issuance of statements by BRICS leaders to develop a reserve currency to replace the US dollar, along with the utilization of local currencies in international trade, signifies a concerted effort. Countries like Argentina, Bolivia, India, and the UAE settling payments in yuan and rupees further weakens the dollar's supremacy. The acquisition of gold by BRICS nations and the issuance of bonds in local currencies by the NDB contribute to the ongoing de-dollarization process.

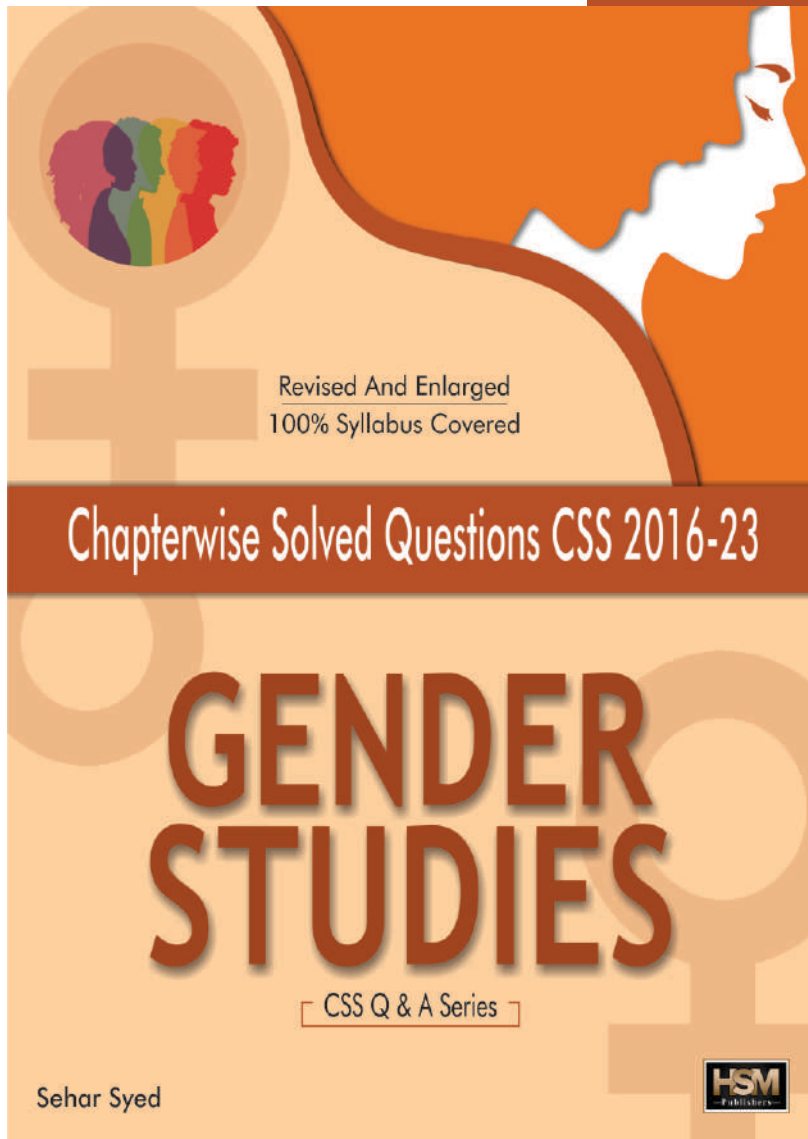
➤ **Challenges and Unresolved Questions: The Road Ahead for BRICS**

Despite the momentum gained by BRICS in challenging the Western world order, the road to establishing a comprehensive Southern World Order is rife with complexities and unanswered questions. De-dollarization, while underway, remains a gradual process, with the US dollar still prevalent in many financial transactions. China's increasing influence in the Middle East, coupled with uncertainties surrounding Saudi Arabia's future foreign policy stance, adds layers of unpredictability. The geopolitical landscape, especially considering the political tensions between India and China, raises doubts about the long-term cohesion of BRICS. India's strategic role in the India-Middle East-Europe Corridor introduces a potential source of conflict within the bloc. As the winds of reform continue to blow, BRICS must navigate these intricate challenges to realize its vision of a just and equitable world order.

➤ **Conclusion: Navigating the Winds of Change**

In conclusion, the shifting paradigms of contemporary warfare towards economic battlegrounds and the rise of BRICS challenging the Western world order represent pivotal moments in global history. Mitigating the threats associated with economic-centric warfare demands bold steps, including global restructuring and the depoliticization of key institutions. Meanwhile, BRICS nations are reshaping international institutions, advocating for a more equitable world order.

The challenges and unresolved questions underscore the complexity of these transformations. De-dollarization, institutional reforms, and geopolitical dynamics pose formidable challenges, requiring careful navigation. As the world stands at the crossroads of change, the choices made by global leaders will shape the trajectory of international relations and the quest for a more inclusive and cooperative world order. The spirit of competition must give way to a spirit of cooperation to surmount these challenges and usher in an era of collective human development—a goal that, until now, has remained a distant dream.



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Navigating Pakistan's Economic Crossroads: Challenges, Strategies & Path to Recovery

Pakistan finds itself at a critical juncture, facing a deepening economic crisis that demands urgent attention. Renowned economist Dr. Jeffrey Sachs highlights the failure of political systems to address people's needs and underscores the necessity of peace between India and Pakistan for regional prosperity. Despite challenges, Sachs proposes a comprehensive national investment plan as an alternative to IMF-led austerity measures. Another perspective delves into the multifaceted crisis, emphasizing the severity of Pakistan's macroeconomic challenges and a silent human capital crisis. The current economic scenario is described as 'a crisis like no other,' requiring a nuanced understanding of its origins and implications.

➤ Understanding Pakistan's Economic Crisis








The ongoing economic crisis in Pakistan is distinctive, merging intricate challenges spanning political, governance, and environmental spheres. Sachs draws parallels with past economic crises worldwide, while acknowledging the slow recognition of the current crisis's extent. The crisis involves a convergence of shocks, including a substantial term of trade shock, external capital availability constraints, and a comprehensive public debt crisis. Political and constitutional crises exacerbate the situation, leading to a crisis of confidence in the country's governance. Banking sector stress and a lack of confidence pose significant threats to Pakistan's economic prospects.

➤ The Promise and Peril of Economic Recovery

The first half of 2023 saw Pakistan teetering on the edge of economic default, with the IMF program derailed. The subsequent reversal, marked by a new nine-month program and financial aid from China and Middle East allies, averted immediate default. However, challenges persist. The government must navigate politically sensitive measures mandated by the existing IMF program, negotiate a new program, and secure investments from Gulf nations. The economic landscape is delicate, and adept policymaking is crucial to avoid deeper turmoil.

➤ Challenges in Economic Revival

Policymakers face three significant challenges in Pakistan's economic recovery. Firstly, implementing unpopular measures to fulfill the existing short-term IMF program, leading to potential inflation and public dissatisfaction. Secondly, negotiating a new IMF program amid political uncertainties, with elections and an interim government complicating the process. Thirdly, attracting investments from the

INDICATORS	2021-22	2022-23 (JUL-MAR)
 GDP Growth	6.1%	0.29%
 Agriculture	4.3%	1.55%
 Industries	6.8%	-2.94%
 Services	6.6%	0.86%
 Per Capita Income (USD)	1,765	1,568
 Investment (as % of GDP)	15.70%	13.63%
 Savings (as % of GDP)	11.10%	12.60%



Gulf requires addressing bureaucratic inefficiencies, policy uncertainties, and political instability, historically deterring investors.

➤ **International Politics of Economic Recovery**

Pakistan's economic recovery is intertwined with political ties with external powers. Balancing relationships with the UAE, Saudi Arabia, China, and the United States is crucial. Investments from the Gulf have strategic implications beyond economic returns. The challenge lies in harmonizing these relationships, with optimism that investments from the Gulf can complement the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor. Navigating these complex and sometimes conflicting priorities is essential for long-term stability.

➤ **The Economic Test and Future Prospects**

While the Stand-by Arrangement provides temporary relief, Pakistan needs fundamental policy changes for sustainable recovery. Negotiations for a longer-term IMF deal are inevitable, and the country requires home-grown structural reforms to break free from economic challenges. As the election season approaches, economic issues become central, shifting public expectations. The election outcome, likely resulting in a coalition government, poses challenges for serious economic reform. The future government, regardless of composition, holds the responsibility of advancing the economic revival process.

➤ **Conclusion**

Pakistan stands at a crossroads, grappling with a multifaceted economic crisis that demands a holistic and strategic approach. The insights from Dr. Jeffrey Sachs, the challenges in the economic revival, and the international political dynamics emphasize the need for comprehensive reforms. The future hinges on effective policymaking, navigating global relationships, and fostering a commitment to economic recovery. As the nation faces this critical juncture, the choices made in the coming months will shape Pakistan's economic destiny for years to come.



GLACIERS MELTING, HEATWAVES ~ ALL OBVIOUS YET ALL IGNORED ~

COP-28: A Crucial Crossroads for Climate Action and Pakistan's Role

➤ Introduction: COP-28's Pivotal Role and the Birth of the Loss and Damage Fund

As COP-28, the 28th Conference of Parties to the UNFCCC, concludes in Dubai, it marks a crucial juncture in global efforts to address climate change. Attended by representatives from nearly 200 countries, including Pakistan, this conference commenced with a significant achievement—the establishment of the Loss and Damage Fund. Pakistan, a country profoundly impacted by climate change, had actively lobbied for such a fund at COP27, making this development particularly significant.

➤ Challenges and Opportunities for Pakistan: Activating the Funding

While the establishment of the Loss and Damage Fund is a positive step, Pakistan faces challenges in activating the funding. The country must adhere to stringent checks and balances, showcasing a commitment to utilizing the funds effectively. This comes at a time when Pakistan grapples with severe environmental challenges, placing it among the countries most affected by climate change, according to the Global Climate Risk Index 2022.



➤ Global Emission Reductions and the Methane Pledge

Amid the urgency to combat climate change, COP-28 witnessed several pledges and discussions aimed at reducing global emissions. Notably, more than 50 oil and gas companies, including industry giants like Saudi Aramco, ExxonMobil, and Shell, signed the Oil and Gas Decarbonisation Charter, committing to net-zero emissions by 2050 and near-zero methane emissions by 2030. This move reflects a collective effort to address emissions from a sector often considered the "most harmful industry on the planet."

➤ COP-28's Focus on Fossil Fuels and Fossil Fuel Producers

A draft resolution regarding the future of fossil fuels—coal, gas, and oil—was a point of contention at COP-28. While some advocated for decisive action, including phasing out fossil fuels, others, particularly oil producers like Saudi Arabia and top consumers like India, remained resistant. UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres emphasized the need for nations to agree on phasing out fossil fuels, acknowledging the possibility of different countries moving at different paces.

➤ Pakistan's Vulnerability and Economic Impact

For Pakistan, the stakes at COP-28 are high. According to the Global Climate Risk Index 2022, Pakistan is the fifth most affected country by climate change. Extreme weather conditions, including heatwaves, floods, and droughts, pose significant challenges. UNICEF's 2021 Children's Climate Risk Index highlighted that children in Pakistan, along with other South Asian countries, are at 'extremely high risk' due to climate change impacts. The economic toll of climate change on Pakistan, estimated by the Asian Development Bank, could reach 18-20% of its GDP by 2050.

➤ Pakistan's Dilemma: Balancing Climate Goals and Energy Needs

However, Pakistan faces a unique set of challenges. The country, burdened by external debt and a widening financing gap, must navigate a delicate balance between combating climate change and

meeting its energy needs. Ambitious projects, such as the shift to 60% renewable energy and 30% electric vehicles by 2030, align with climate goals. Still, the country has sought to quadruple its domestic coal-fired capacity, presenting a contradiction to its climate change objectives.



➤ Challenges in Infrastructure and Execution

Despite ambitious goals, Pakistan encounters obstacles in infrastructure and execution. The lack of physical infrastructure, such as charging stations, poses a hurdle to mass electric vehicle expansion. The Billion Tree Tsunami project faced setbacks during floods, highlighting the vulnerability of environmental initiatives to climate-related events. While the intentions are ambitious, effective planning and execution remain crucial.

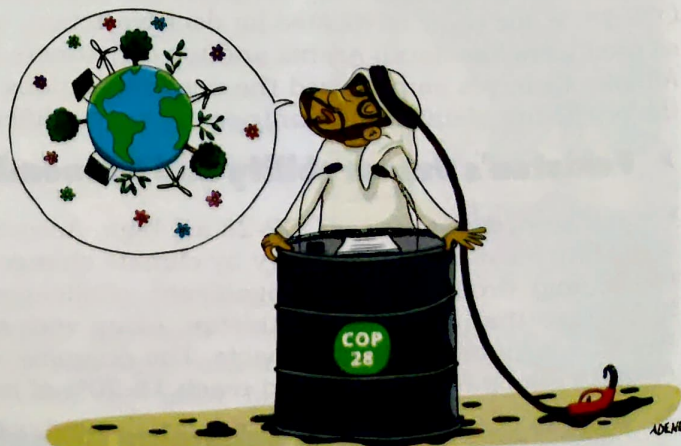
➤ Initiatives and the Role of Nature-Based Solutions

Amid challenges, Pakistan showcased visionary initiatives at COP-28. The Living Indus Initiative, committing an estimated USD 11-17 billion, aims to restore the Indus River basin, prioritizing long-term ecosystem health. Simultaneously, the Recharge Pakistan Project, a USD 78 million endeavor, focuses on ecosystem-based adaptation in Sindh, Balochistan, and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. These nature-based solutions underscore Pakistan's commitment to environmental sustainability.

➤ Pakistan's Active Engagement at COP-28

As COP-28 progresses, the Pakistan Pavilion emerged as a focal point for discussions, hosting panels on initiatives like the Living Indus Initiative. The Ministry of Climate Change and Environmental Coordination orchestrated 28 activities on the sidelines, engaging in negotiations on critical climate change matters. Prime Minister Imran Khan expressed deep appreciation for these efforts, positioning Pakistan as a beacon of environmental leadership.

➤ Conclusion: The Path Forward for Pakistan and Global Cooperation



In conclusion, COP-28 represents a pivotal moment for global climate action, with Pakistan playing a crucial role in advocating for its interests and learning from other countries' experiences. The challenges are substantial, from activating climate funds to balancing energy needs with climate goals. Pakistan's

initiatives, including nature-based solutions, demonstrate a commitment to addressing environmental challenges. As the world grapples with the urgency of mitigating climate change, the path forward requires continued global cooperation, effective planning, and decisive action. Time is of the essence, and the outcomes of COP-28 will shape the trajectory of climate action for years to come.

Climate Action at COP28: Overcoming Doubts and Fostering Unprecedented Progress

Climate change discussions at COP28 faced initial uncertainties and criticism, notably due to concerns about the summit's location in a major oil-producing country. Critics questioned potential biases toward the fossil fuel industry, particularly with the appointment of Dr. Sultan Al Jaber, CEO of the UAE's ADNOC, as the president of COP28. Despite this skepticism, the summit has proven productive and inclusive, with notable progress on issues like the Loss and Damage Fund.

COP 28 - Important Outcomes

Major COP Outcomes Explained

- » **Transition Away From Fossil-Fuel-** Nearly 200 countries agreed to "transition away from fossil fuels in energy systems" at the COP28. The agreement is the first time countries have made this pledge.
- » **Global Renewables and Energy Efficiency Pledge-** Signatory countries to work together to **triple** the world's installed renewable energy generation capacity to at least 11,000 GW by 2030. The countries must collectively **double** the global average annual rate of energy efficiency improvements from around 2% to over 4% every year until 2030.
- » **Loss and Damage Fund-** Operationalization of the Loss and Damage (L&D) fund aimed at compensating countries grappling with climate change impacts. Commitments worth about **US\$ 800 million** had been made to the Fund. The World Bank will be the "interim host" of the fund for four years.
- » **Global Goal on Adaptation-** The draft text on the Global Goal on Adaptation (GGA) was introduced at COP 28. It aims to enhance climate change adaptation by increasing awareness and funding towards countries' adaptation needs in the context of the 1.5/2°C goal of the Paris Agreement
- » **The Global Cooling Pledge-** 66 national government signatories committed to working together to **reduce** cooling-related emissions across all sectors **by at least 68% globally** relative to 2022 levels by 2050.
- » **Declaration to Triple Nuclear Energy-** The declaration launched at COP28 aims to **triple** global nuclear energy capacity by 2050. It was endorsed by 22 National Governments.
- » **Coal Transition Accelerator-** France, in collaboration with various countries and organizations, introduced the Coal Transition Accelerator. The initiative aims to leverage best practices and lessons learned for effective coal transition policies.
- » **CHAMP Initiative-** Coalition for High Ambition Multilevel Partnership (CHAMP) for Climate Action was launched at COP 28. This initiative aims at efficient planning, financing, implementation, and monitoring of climate strategies
- » **Climate Finance-** Under the New Collective Quantified Goal (NCQG) for climate finance, wealthy nations owe developing countries **USD 500 billion** in 2025.

➤ Unprecedented Momentum and Optimism

Contrary to doubts, COP28 showcased distinctive progress and inclusivity. Dr. Al Jaber's leadership emphasized a unique approach, engaging various stakeholders, NGOs, and industries. The loss and damage issue saw early consensus, setting a positive tone. Surprisingly, protests in the UAE were permitted, indicating a shift in the country's stance on dissent. While activists highlight potential motives for the government's leniency, concerns about limited approved protests persist.

➤ UAE's Climate Innovation and Investment

The UAE positioned itself as a climate innovator, making substantial investments in decarbonization. ADNOC accelerated its net-zero greenhouse gas target, ceasing routine methane venting and flaring. Dubai aims to generate 75% of its power from clean sources by 2050. The paradigm shift in the climate narrative raises questions about the role of for-profit entities and tech companies in climate diplomacy.

➤ Global Warming Targets and UN's Warning

Days before COP28, the UN Environment Programme's Emissions Gap report raised alarms about the planet's trajectory, predicting a dangerous temperature rise. If global warming targets are missed,

catastrophic consequences, such as species extinction, groundwater depletion, and glacial melt, could unfold. Despite decades of climate conferences, global greenhouse gas emissions continue to rise, emphasizing the urgent need for greater global commitment.

➤ **COP28 and Pakistan's Climate Challenges**

Pakistan, despite contributing minimally to global emissions, faces severe climate impacts. COP28 signals the need for meaningful action, emphasizing a shift from dependency on external aid. The country must align with global trends, focusing on biodiversity restoration and environmental justice. Failure to adapt to changing environmental standards could lead to international isolation and economic stagnation.

➤ **Climate Action and Global Security**

UN Secretary-General António Guterres stressed the urgency of addressing current climate trends to prevent a three-degree temperature rise. Climate change is identified as a risk multiplier for conflict and instability, necessitating global cooperation. The European Union is taking steps to address climate change through green policies, a Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism, and partnerships with regions like Africa, Latin America, and South Asia.

➤ **Reviving Pulse Production in Pakistan**

Approximately 40 million Pakistanis face nightly hunger, emphasizing the need for sustainable solutions. Pulses, sustainable protein sources, could address food security challenges. However, factors such as government policies, limited seed improvements, inadequate machinery, labor shortages, and underinvestment in R&D hinder pulse production. A multifaceted strategy involving seed enhancement, tech adoption, intercropping, mechanization, partnerships, knowledge dissemination, policy support, and market reforms is essential for revival.

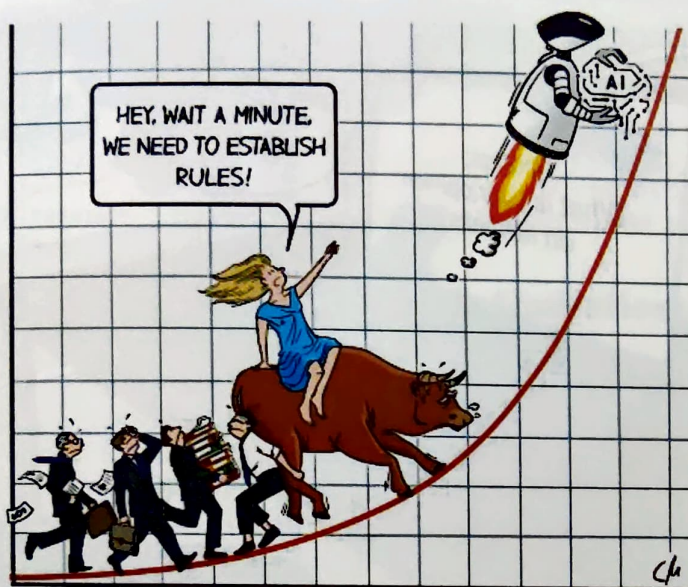


➤ **Loss and Damage Fund Challenges**

The Loss and Damage Fund, established during COP27, aims to assist developing nations, but challenges remain. Pledges fall short of the \$300 billion annual investment needed by 2030. Issues such as fund disbursement, nature of support, prioritization, transparency, private entity involvement, and considerations for historically non-polluting nations require comprehensive attention. The fund's success hinges on addressing these factors effectively. In conclusion, COP28, despite initial scepticism, has demonstrated unprecedented progress and inclusivity. The global community faces urgent challenges, and innovative solutions are essential. From addressing climate change's impact on global security to reviving pulse production in Pakistan, the need for concerted efforts, adaptability, and sustainable practices is evident. The success of climate action lies in navigating complexities, fostering global cooperation, and prioritizing environmental sustainability.

AI shall not replace humans – But humans having AI Skills shall replace all other humans.

Understanding Artificial Intelligence: 'Case of Prompt Adoption'



There has been an extensive discourse surrounding artificial intelligence (AI), encompassing discussions on its potential ramifications and parallels with human consciousness. The term "Artificial Intelligence" is attributed to the late American computer scientist John McCarthy, who is said to have coined it in 1956 while collaborating on a proposal for the renowned Dartmouth conference. This conference marked the initiation of AI as a formal field of study and research. McCarthy, widely recognized as the father of Artificial Intelligence in the realm of computer science, likely had little foresight into the significant challenges his innovation would pose to nation-states over the subsequent seven decades. Noam Chomsky, in his article for The New York Times, delineated a fundamental distinction between human

consciousness and AI. Chomsky illustrated this contrast by using the example of an infant, who, upon receiving fragments of language data, develops the ability to construct intricate language structures. In contrast, AI relies on processing all available data, searching for patterns to generate responses based on probability. However, certain aspects such as emotions and feelings—like love, nostalgia, and morality—are exclusive to human experience. Advocates of AI often shy away from engaging in conversations about these distinctly human attributes. Regardless of the advancements AI may achieve, it remains incapable of composing a piece like "Daffodils" by simply observing flowers along the edge of a bay.

➤ AI's Impacts on Global Economy and Employment

In an era where technological evolution is constant, the rapid rise of Artificial Intelligence (AI) stands out as both revolutionary and potentially perilous. While AI has transformed various facets of life, from sports to medicine, it brings significant challenges. Pioneers like Dr. Geoffrey Hinton, considered the godfather of AI, have raised alarms about the dangers of AI, emphasizing the need for regulations. Notable figures like Sam Altman and Elon Musk have echoed these concerns, viewing AI as potentially more hazardous than nuclear weapons. AI's impact spans politics, economies, academia, and the military, reshaping dynamics and introducing new threats. Social media misinformation, AI-generated images causing panic, and the rise of deepfakes leading to potential unrest highlight the dark side of this technology. Economically, AI offers increased productivity, yet it threatens millions of jobs, necessitating a shift in skills. Creative fields like graphics design face challenges as AI simplifies complex tasks. Tools like Chat GPT and Google's Bard streamline writing tasks, but they pose risks to academic integrity, raising questions about the authenticity of content. The integration of AI in security and military applications introduces ethical dilemmas, from surveillance to decision-making. Concerns about misinformation, cyber warfare, and human-machine relationships in the military are critical.

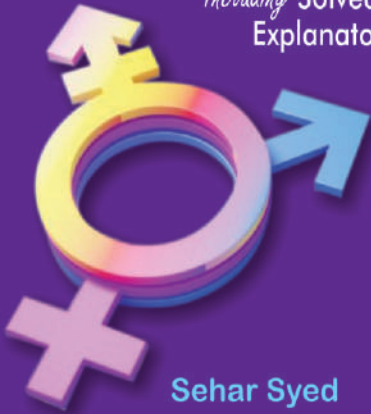
The dark side of AI extends to internet scams, including voice-based scams facilitated by AI tools that clone voices with alarming accuracy. The potential for AI-driven biological warfare adds another layer of concern, reminiscent of the recent trauma caused by COVID-19. While technology evolves, it's prudent

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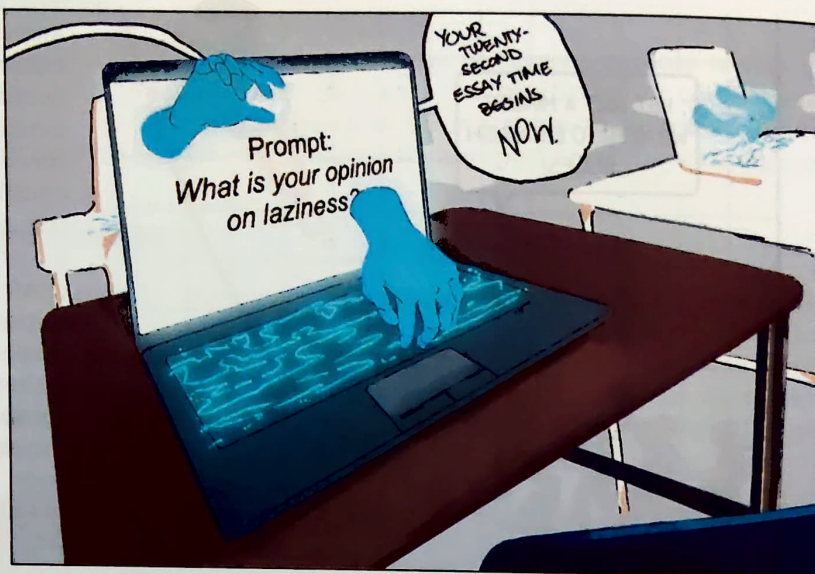
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use is crucial. Recognizing the need for guidelines and regulations, the global community must collaboratively develop a comprehensive framework for AI.

As AI encroaches in our lives, awareness has become paramount, with Stanford University's 2023 AI Index revealing a surge in legislation globally. However, these laws address limited aspects, emphasizing the need for a more forward-looking and encompassing regulatory approach. Richard Baldwin underscores the importance of AI awareness, highlighting that it is not AI itself but the lack of understanding that poses risks. Equipping ourselves with basic AI knowledge becomes an ethical obligation to harness its advantages and avoid the risk of being replaced in this evolving technological landscape.

➤ The Impacts of Artificial Intelligence on Education

The 21st century has witnessed transformative revolutions, from the internet to electric cars, reshaping human life and its place in the world. A recent addition to this continuum is Artificial Intelligence (AI), a force set on revolutionizing various facets of life, particularly in education and health. A notable player in this AI landscape is **ChatGPT**, surpassing traditional search engines in providing concise, user-ready knowledge on a single page. While this revolution streamlines information consumption, it also presents challenges to the existing educational paradigm. This AI-driven shift poses profound challenges to cognition systems,

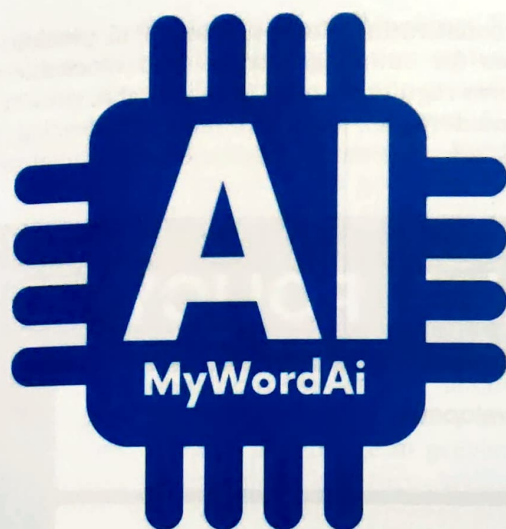


instructional methodologies, and the roles of teachers and students. The traditional process of guidance, work, and verification by teachers is swiftly replaced by instant, AI-generated responses. Embracing this change is imperative, acknowledging that opposition is futile in the face of an evolving reality. Teachers and students are already experiencing the benefits of AI in and outside the classroom, enhancing instruction and learning on a global scale. However, this integration should be approached cautiously, preserving the unique skills of teachers and considering cultural and social contexts. Students, too, benefit by reinforcing information at home, doubling their knowledge and focus. Time saved can be redirected towards advanced research and knowledge acquisition. The inevitability of AI's integration into education systems requires proactive measures. Training courses should be initiated to equip teachers at all levels to effectively incorporate AI in classrooms, ensuring students derive meaningful benefits. This global revolution demands a positive attitude and proactive response. Avoidance is not an option; instead, embracing AI can usher in new opportunities, preventing job obsolescence and positioning our future generations at the forefront of technological progress. The inertia of the past should not hinder us; instead, a readiness to adapt will empower us to thrive in an AI-driven world.

➤ Multifaceted Educational Companion: ChatGPT's Role in the Learning Journey

ChatGPT serves as a transformative tool in enhancing educational accessibility, breaking down barriers for individuals with disabilities and non-English speakers. For instance, it offers spoken responses for students with visual impairments, summarizes course content for those with learning disabilities, and allows students facing typing challenges to articulate their queries verbally. Moreover, ChatGPT facilitates language translation, enabling students to comprehend course material in a language of their choice. This feature streamlines understanding and eliminates language barriers. In contrast to traditional methods involving extensive textbook and internet searches for assignment material, ChatGPT provides a time-efficient alternative, simplifying the assignment completion process.

In the realm of higher education, ChatGPT proves invaluable for professors. It aids in creating comprehensive lesson plans, generating diverse types of questions for assessments, analyzing student assignments for grading purposes, and offering links to additional educational resources. The tool also



provides tips for enhancing student engagement and managing classroom behavior. Understanding individual learning styles, ChatGPT tailors a personalized learning experience, analyzing academic performance to structure courses according to students' needs. This facilitates comfortable-paced learning and thorough comprehension of complex concepts. Interaction with text-based research or learning material through ChatGPT allows quick access to additional educational content.

Students can leverage ChatGPT to enhance the quality of their academic essays by receiving individualized and personalized feedback. As exams approach, ChatGPT becomes a valuable study companion, recapitulating class notes with a focus on key terms, aiding in formulating ideal answers to important questions, and generating practice questions to identify strengths and weaknesses in subject matter comprehension.

In essence, ChatGPT emerges as a multifaceted tool supporting various aspects of the educational journey.

➤ **AI in Academia: ChatGPT's Limitations**

Academic integrity emerges as a paramount concern when considering the integration of ChatGPT in higher education. Many educators express apprehensions, contending that its use in writing assignments may foster cheating and plagiarism. The rapid generation of responses by ChatGPT raises concerns about diminishing students' abilities to brainstorm, think critically, and exhibit creativity in their answers. While the responses generated by ChatGPT may appear plausible and well-written, they often lack insight and may not be necessarily accurate. The challenge lies in detecting the inaccuracies within the information, posing a potential detriment to students' learning experience and decision-making skills. Furthermore, the inherent biases within the datasets used to train AI chatbots, including ChatGPT, raise alarms about the potential amplification of discrimination against specific groups of people. This situation creates an unhealthy learning environment and underscores the importance of addressing biases in AI systems.

Despite being well-informed, ChatGPT has limitations. It struggles with niche topics and may not be aware of recent developments in various fields. Additionally, its singular-task focus hinders its ability to respond effectively when students pose multiple questions simultaneously. Contextual comprehension proves to be another challenge for ChatGPT. It may find it difficult to grasp the nuances of human language, leading to instances where it misinterprets humor or sarcasm, providing irrelevant responses. Emotional intelligence (EI) emerges as a crucial factor in educational settings, setting human educators apart. Unlike virtual chatbots like ChatGPT, human educators possess the ability to understand students' emotions and respond appropriately. While ChatGPT may exhibit a semblance of empathy, it falls short in comprehending complex human emotions and providing adequate emotional support, highlighting the importance of balancing technological advancements with the human touch in education.

➤ **The Menace of AI-Generated Deepfakes**

In March, the internet was set ablaze with images supposedly depicting the arrest of former US president Donald Trump. However, these were quickly identified as 'deepfakes,' authentic-looking content crafted using artificial intelligence (AI). While initially used for humor, the surge in politically motivated deepfakes raises concerns. The imperfections in current deepfake technology allow for detection, but experts predict increased sophistication. In Pakistan, political factions have reportedly used deepfakes to tarnish opponents, exemplified by a recent AI-generated image shared by a mainstream party. AI's evolving capabilities present serious challenges for policymakers. The malicious use of AI-generated deepfakes in polarized societies can fabricate hate speech, inciting violence against minorities. The UN warns of this danger, particularly in conflict zones. In international conflicts, deepfakes can forge military orders and sow confusion, complicating conflict containment. A recent report from the Brookings Institution emphasizes the need for a cost-benefit analysis before deploying deepfake technology against high-profile targets. The most significant threat lies in undermining democracy by

disseminating AI-generated deepfakes to sway voter choices, constituting election fraud. Policymakers must implement short-term measures like digital signatures for campaign videos and blockchain technology for authenticity monitoring. Looking ahead, long-term regulation of AI is essential to prevent unbridled use. Various global regulatory models are under consideration, and Pakistan must develop a context-sensitive approach. While celebrating technological advancements, vigilance is crucial to restrain AI's potentially malicious aspects.

PAKISTAN'S NATIONAL AI POLICY

- 1 Ignite NTF to allocate 30% of its funds towards the development of the National Artificial Intelligence Fund by 2023.
- 2 Training of 1M+ new and existing IT graduates in "high-impact applied skills in AI and Allied Technologies" by 2027.
- 3 Standardisation of the data of state-owned enterprises, boards, and civil authorities for applying AI-based algorithms"
- 4 Centers of Excellence" to be established across the country by 2026, where standardised data will be available for processing through a sandbox-based licensing approach.
- 5 3,000 scholarships to be awarded in postgraduate and doctoral programs by 2026.
- 6 2,000 patents to be filed on AI-led products and solutions by 2026.
- 7 Establishment of AI Directorate under National Commission for Data Protection by 2024.
- 8 1,000 AI-led R&D initiatives to be funded in academia and the private sector via fiscal and non-fiscal support by 2026.

➤ AI and Pakistan

The transformative impact of AI has reverberated across developed and developing nations alike, leaving individuals, companies, and governments grappling with how to harness this advanced technology for constructive purposes while mitigating its potential destructive consequences. The global discourse is centered on a highly debatable question: Is AI an opportunity, a threat, or perhaps both? AI tools such as **Chat GPT** from **Open AI** and **Google's Bard** have already revolutionized the world of writing, enabling the near-instantaneous generation of extensive analytical economic reports, essays, and blogs through text generation and analysis tools. However, this technology, designed to emulate human intelligence, carries the potential to jeopardize the very existence of its creators.

Computer scientists worldwide are sounding alarms about AI, urging governments to treat it as a policy matter and establish a global governance regime akin to institutions like the International Atomic Energy

Agency or the International Monetary Fund. Concerns abound that in the wrong hands, AI could prove disastrous for ill-prepared nation-states engrossed in self-serving geopolitical and geo-economic conflicts rather than collaborating for the greater good. Experts advocate for the creation of a global AI watchdog to address threats originating from AI, including online scams, cyber warfare, the dissemination of misinformation, and propaganda. Recent research by the computer security firm McAfee reveals the availability of free AI tools on the internet that enable scammers to clone audio with an up to 85% matching ratio between the cloned and original voice—a potential recipe for internet scams.

As the world's fifth most populous nuclear-armed nation, Pakistan cannot afford to ignore the challenges and opportunities presented by AI. The country, with a population of approximately **250 million**, has recently drafted its **National AI Policy**, criticized by industry stakeholders, including the Overseas Investors Chamber of Commerce and Industry (OICCI), a significant representative body of foreign investors operating in Pakistan. The OICCI, which includes global technology giants like IBM and SAP, highlights the policy's lack of clarity and coherence, emphasizing the need for clear guidelines on data collection, storage, and usage to prevent misuse and breaches of personal data. While the government expresses eagerness to embrace Artificial Intelligence, stakeholders stress the importance of a more detailed policy draft that addresses potential challenges. The Collingridge Dilemma encapsulates the challenge of AI policy development, emphasizing the difficulty of anticipating challenges until they arise, at which point there may be insufficient time to address them.

Where does Pakistan stand on AI Readiness

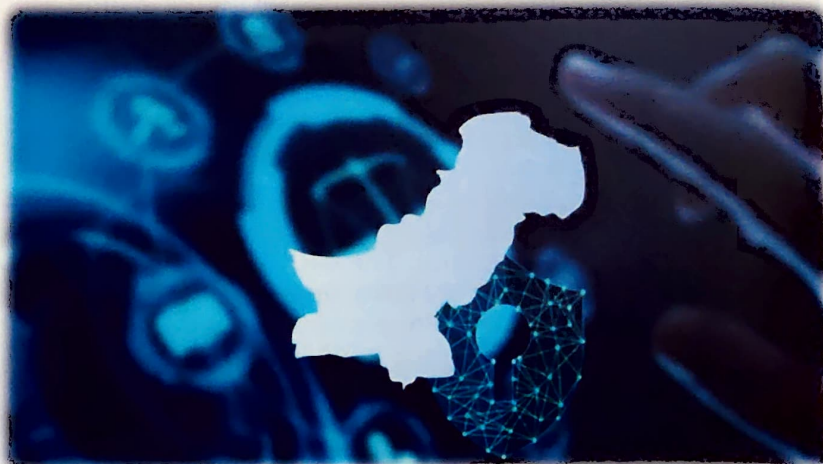
GOVERNMENT PILLAR	
Vision	50.00
Governance and Ethics	39.80
Digital Capacity	47.50
Adaptability	39.97
TECHNOLOGY SECTOR	
Maturity	15.61
Innovation Capacity	40.29
Human Capital	48.12
DATA AND INFRASTRUCTURE	
Infrastructure	22.12
Data Availability	49.15
Data Representativeness	53.73
OVERALL POSITION	
Score	40.22
Ranking	92/183

Source: Government AI Readiness Index 2022 - Oxford Insights



➤ From Challenge to Opportunity: Shaping Pakistan's Role in the Global AI Landscape

Policymakers face the challenge of striking a nuanced balance between swiftly responding to emerging technologies and exercising prudence by gaining a comprehensive understanding of their long-term implications. Hastily formulating policy responses, especially for complex technological advancements like AI, is a risk we cannot afford to take. A prominent concern associated with AI innovations is the perceived threat to employment. The intelligent automation of manual labor is anticipated to lead to widespread



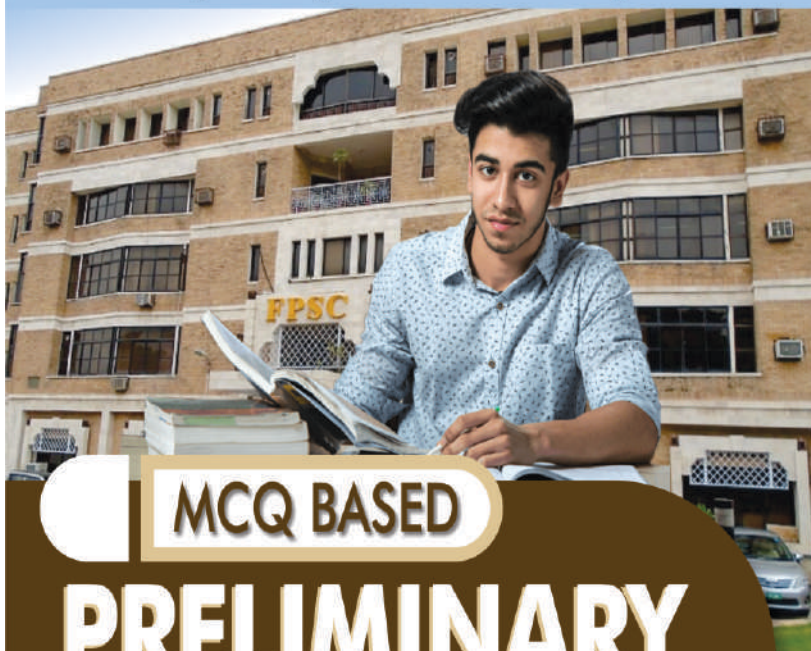
job displacement globally, with reports even suggesting large-scale layoffs by industry leaders such as IBM. However, it is crucial to consider estimates from the World Economic Forum, which predict that by 2025, AI will generate 12 million more new jobs than the 85 million it may displace, resulting in a net creation of 97 million jobs.

In addressing this scenario, policymakers in Islamabad must be proactive, recognizing that the new jobs forecasted by the World Economic Forum will necessitate specific skills and technical knowledge. The government's policy approach should therefore navigate a delicate balance between fostering AI innovation and addressing potential risks, such as biases in AI algorithms and its impact on job displacement. Several noteworthy recommendations have been put forth by the Overseas Chamber for policymakers in Islamabad:

- Launching public awareness campaigns to educate citizens about data privacy and the protective measures in place, as ethical AI deployment is crucial for building public trust and ensuring long-term success.
- Incorporating the principles of fairness, accountability, transparency, and explainability into AI policy.
- Establishing an independent body to evaluate AI applications for ethical considerations, ensuring responsible AI adoption.
- Setting up an independent AI regulatory body for a risk management framework, defining guidelines, policies, and procedures.
- Recognizing the evolving nature of AI, updating regulations frequently, and allowing relevant organizations to develop customized frameworks tailored to their specific AI development needs.
- Enforcing rules on data privacy, data security, and AI ethics, collaborating with companies, universities, and organizations to ensure compliance.
- Establishing a state-of-the-art lab staffed by forensic experts to identify and verify AI-related frauds, addressing potential risks associated with evolving AI technologies.

The Pakistani government should prioritize education on a national scale, recognizing that the benefits of AI advancements can only be realized if our young population is equipped with the necessary skills and knowledge. The focus should be on people's development, fostering an educated society capable of making optimal use of the forthcoming technological advancements in the form of AI. Tackling illiteracy should be a top priority, and the government must allocate sufficient funds while ensuring proactive spending to achieve the desired results. Experts emphasize the critical need for governments to initiate conversations about preparing society, the economy, and the political system for the emerging implications of AI. They have set a five-year deadline for governments to adopt a cohesive policy stance;

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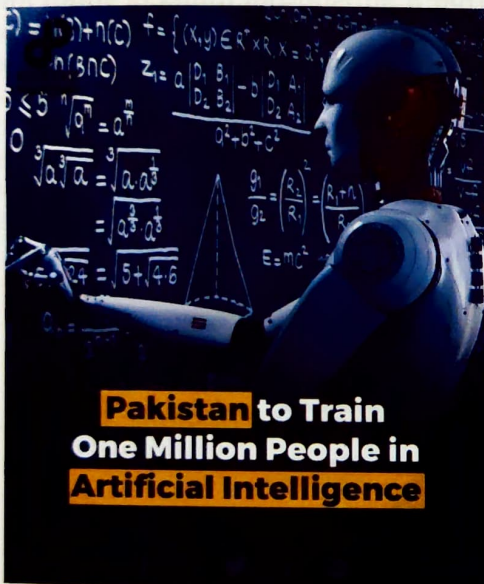
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otherwise, the world will face a tsunami of AI effects. This window of time is an opportunity for global discussions to determine the future course of action and transform this challenge into an opportunity.

While policymakers in the West have delayed policy responses to AI, with the United Kingdom stating that a dedicated regulator for AI is unnecessary, other countries like Canada, the European Union, and Singapore have formulated clear AI policies addressing ethical considerations, data governance, and AI innovations. Pakistan can draw valuable lessons from the experiences of these nations and adopt best practices to address ethical challenges and promote responsible AI development. To contribute to shaping the global AI landscape, Pakistan should engage with multinational organizations such as the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development and the World Economic Forum.

Collaboration with these organizations and active participation in global forums on AI governance will enhance Pakistan's understanding of international AI standards and reinforce its position as a responsible participant in the AI revolution. Given the rapid pace at which AI technology is expected to spread, the government's response should be swift, as it surpasses the time-consuming processes of routine policymaking in parliamentary procedures. It is essential to act promptly to ensure that this revolutionary technological asset does not turn into a liability for Pakistan.

➤ Crafting a Vision for Pakistan's Tech-driven Future



As advanced nations grapple with the integration of generative artificial intelligence (AI) into their workforce and systems, the rest of the world is likely to follow suit. The transformation in thought and action, along with the potential benefits for countries like Pakistan, must be carefully considered to mitigate the risks of misuse. AI development has been ongoing for the past 15-20 years, with the emergence of various forms such as ChatGPT and applications in services, movie streaming, military operations, driverless cars, and more. However, these advancements come with both positive and negative consequences, depending on their applications, similar to other technological developments like nuclear or space technologies. The significant impact of AI on the economy and job market requires thorough evaluation. Certain jobs may become obsolete, necessitating employees to acquire different skills and educational backgrounds. While this may lead to job losses, optimizing supply chain programs could strengthen the economy.

In Pakistan, businesses like **Daraz, Food Panda, and Careem** already leverage some form of AI to enhance daily operations and logistics management, aiming to maximize revenue and growth. It is hoped that other companies, both government and private institutions, irrespective of size, will adopt this technology for improved efficiency and competitiveness. However, without proper legislation, AI may be susceptible to abuse, creating confusion in society. Implementing facial recognition for user identification and labeling is essential. Concerns exist that authoritarian governments could misuse AI to identify and target individuals who do not conform to their ideologies. Proper legislation and oversight are crucial to prevent potential misuse.

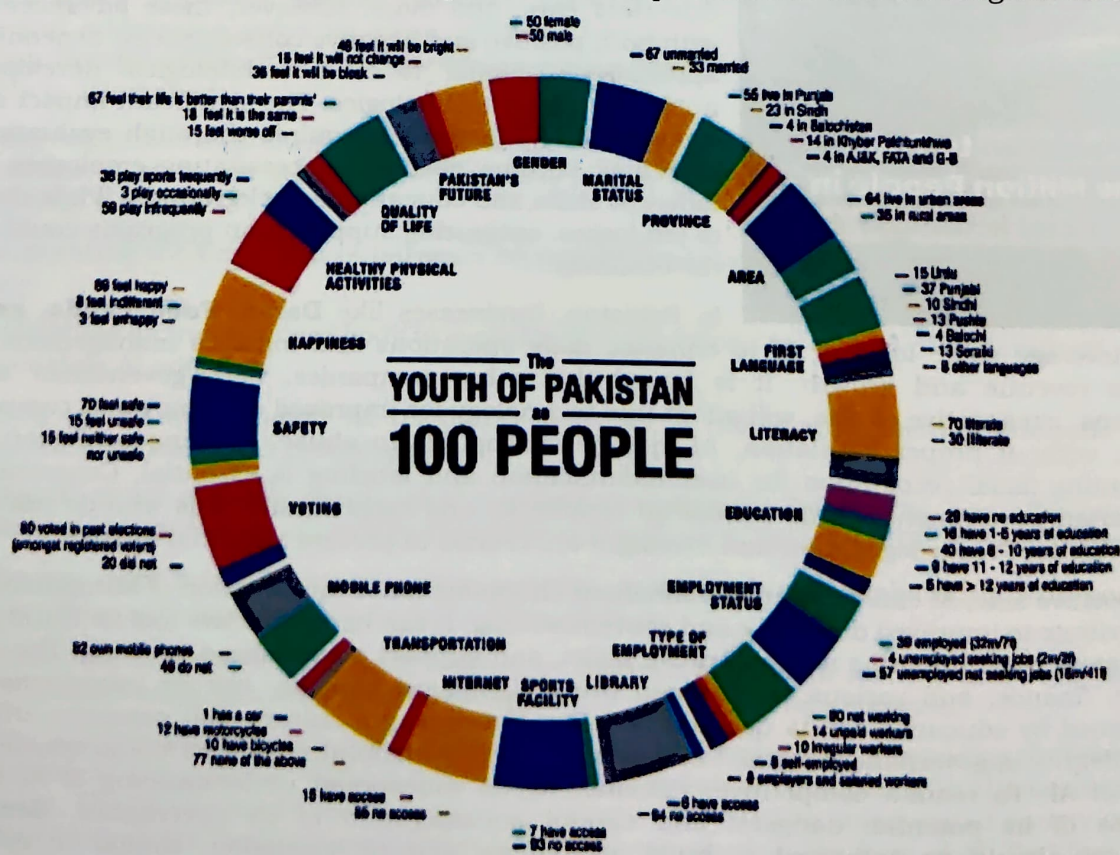
On the positive side, AI can facilitate personalized shopping, mass introduction of autonomous vehicles, and contribute to improved discourse and content writing. It can be an effective tool for fraud prevention, aid educators by automating administrative tasks, and support personalized learning. The use of AI in medicine, finance, and various sectors can bring significant benefits, but its introduction must be accompanied by education on its use and benefits. Developing a culture that promotes efficiency and overall integrity in governance is vital. Collaboration and a collaborative system would benefit more from the use of AI. To remain competitive, Pakistan needs widespread understanding of AI technology, awareness of its potential dangers, and careful consideration of its governance. Seminars and conferences should be organized to build awareness, and AI legislation, similar to cybersecurity regulations, should be introduced in consultation with experts. The government must develop a pool of legal experts well-versed in AI laws. Despite increasing dependence on AI, it remains unclear how it will impact the skills and competence of professionals. This likely depends on how AI is developed and used for the benefit of society.

Real Wealth – Worst Treatment – Declining Trajectory

Youth Bulge & Brain Drain: Case of Pakistan

➤ The Challenge of Youth Bulge in Pakistan

The rapid population growth in Pakistan, ranking among the highest globally, has given rise to a significant youth bulge. Demographers and social scientists posit that the consequences of this phenomenon could be beneficial or detrimental, contingent upon the character and condition of the economy. The favorable outcome is grounded in the assumption that a substantial influx of youth into the labor force and employment will result in the release of substantial creative energy. These young individuals are expected to possess superior education compared to the older population, contributing to increased productivity and fostering accelerated economic growth. Additionally, a decline in the dependency ratio is anticipated to elevate national savings and investment levels. Nevertheless, an opposing perspective suggests that the positive effects of the youth bulge will only materialize if the economy possesses the strength to assimilate new entrants into the labor force through productive employment. Otherwise, there exists a risk that disengaged and disheartened youth may contribute to an increase in crime, violence, and the adoption of radical political and extreme religious ideologies.



○ Surging Youth Unemployment: Recent Incidents in Pakistan

We have witnessed in Pakistan two instances illustrating the challenges stemming from the growing population of idle and unemployed youth in the country. The initial occurrence involved the uncontrolled

and widespread burning of government structures and historical symbols of courage and service to the nation on May 9, 2023. The more recent event underscores the repercussions of perilous human trafficking of Pakistani youth to European nations in pursuit of lucrative employment and better lifestyle. Tragically, the vessel carrying Pakistani and other foreign workers recently sank, resulting in the unfortunate loss of hundreds of lives. This incident became a nationwide tragedy and everyone wailed over the loss of young flesh.

○ Demographic Makeup of Youth in Pakistan

The youth demographic index in Pakistan spans individuals aged 15-19 years, 20-24 years, and 25-29 years, encompassing both males and females. As per the latest Labor Force Survey conducted by the Pakistan Board of Statistics (PBS) in 2020-21, male and female youth collectively represent 13.1% and 13.2% of the total population in the country, amounting to a combined absolute number of 58.7 million. In comparison, the initial Labor Force Survey in 2001-02 reported a lower share of youth in the population at 24.8%, with a total of 35.3 million youth. The annual growth rate of the youth population from 2001-02 to 2020-21 stands at 2.7%, surpassing the overall population growth rate of 2.4%. This growth rate is notably higher than that observed in Bangladesh and India, where Bangladesh has successfully reduced its population growth rate to 1.3%. The annual increase in the youth population is even more modest at 1.0%, contrasting with India's rate of 1.6%. Consequently, with a significantly higher growth rate of 2.7%, Pakistan faces a substantial challenge in effectively engaging its youth into productive avenues.

○ Youth in the Labor Force

According to the 2020-21 Labor Force Survey (LFS), the labor force includes approximately 28.6 million youth, encompassing both males and females, constituting 40% of the total labor force. Male youth exhibit a high labor force participation rate of 73.2%, while female youth lag behind at 24.2% in 2020-21. Notably, the annual increase in female labor force participation has surged to over 5%, surpassing the 2.2% increase observed for male youth. As of 2020-21, males constitute 75% of the youth labor force. The annual influx of youth into the labor force is estimated at 0.8 million, accounting for over 40% of the total annual labor force entrants. Among these entrants, approximately 60% are male. This data sheds light on the evolving dynamics of youth engagement in the labor force, highlights gender disparities and unearths the significant contribution of youth to the overall workforce.

○ Youth Unemployment Challenges

The unemployment rates among youth are a cause for concern, reflecting a challenging scenario. In the case of male youth, the unemployment rate stands at 8.7%, surpassing the 5.5% rate for all male workers in 2020-21. Similarly, female youth faces a notably high unemployment rate standing at 12.6%, compared to the 8.9% rate for all female members of the labor force. The overall count of unemployed youth workers reached 2.77 million in 2020-21, likely exceeding 3 million in 2022-23. This alarming figure constitutes 61% of the total unemployed workers in the country, underscoring the economy's struggle to tap into the anticipated potential of youth.

○ Predicament of Idle and Unemployed Youth in Pakistan

In Pakistan, a staggering 17 million young people find themselves either 'idle' or unemployed, with nearly 7 million of them being males. This colossal figure signifies an underutilization of human capital within the country. Many of these individuals, classified as 'idle,' may have previously sought employment but encountered discouragement due to a lack of success. These idle workers, especially the youth, are at risk of being lured into illegal immigration, if sufficient resources facilitate such a move. The presence of 17 million unemployed and idle youth stands to haunt Pakistan like a specter. This issue is exacerbated by an unemployment rate exceeding 21% among graduate male and female youth, constituting an alarming waste of the nation's scarce human capital.

○ Contours of Youth Unemployment in Different Socio-Economic Setups

It is imperative to pinpoint areas with elevated youth unemployment rates. According to the 2020-21 Labor Force Survey (LFS), urban regions exhibit a 39% higher unemployment rate compared to rural areas. Additionally, the provinces of Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa face notably heightened

unemployment rates among male youth, underscoring the need for targeted interventions in these regions.

○ Pakistan's National Human Development Report by UNDP

Youth constitute 64% of Pakistan's total population, yet a mere 6% have access to higher education, and 29% remain without any formal education, as revealed by the 'Pakistan's National Human Development Report' from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). The report highlights that 39% of young people face notable gender disparities, with limited connectivity and social engagement opportunities. Key findings indicate that only 4% of the country's youth actively pursue employment, while 57% are disengaged from seeking jobs. The majority lacks access to essential resources such as the internet, cell phones, libraries, and sports facilities. Additionally, the report highlights that 9.45 million children are not enrolled in primary schools, and at the current rate, achieving universal enrollment is projected to extend until 2076, contrary to Pakistan's constitutional commitment to free education. To effectively leverage the youth bulge as a demographic dividend, the report recommends quadrupling the annual net enrollment rate from the current 0.92% to 3.8% to meet the global education goal by 2030. Acknowledging that approximately 4 million young people enter the working-age population annually, the report emphasizes the potential of this youth bulge for positive change, particularly in family planning and healthier population management. However, without interventions, the report warns that the current labor force participation and unemployment rates cannot accommodate this influx. It suggests the creation of 1.3 million jobs annually over the next five years to reduce unemployment. The UNDP report highlights the 'Delivering Accelerated Family Planning in Pakistan (DAFPAK)' program, led by the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO), as a recognition of the potential of Pakistan's youth bulge.



○ Empowering Pakistan's Youth

The pressing challenges faced by Pakistan, ranging from development disparities to the exodus of talent, find their nexus in the untapped potential of the country's massive youth population. With over 64% of Pakistanis under 30, the responsibility for national development lies on the shoulders of this substantial demographic strata. Unfortunately, this youth bulge remains largely excluded from policy-making vis-à-vis climate change, development, education, or entrepreneurship initiatives. The absence of opportunities within the country prompts questions about the authorities' role and the factors driving many to seek prospects abroad. Despite Pakistan's abundance in tangible and intangible resources, a significant portion, especially the youth, leaves the country, contributing to massive brain drain. In 2022, over 765,000 talented individuals departed for seeking opportunities overseas. Addressing this issue demands strategies to retain and utilize this talent effectively. The small and mid-size enterprise (SME sector), constituting over five million businesses, plays a pivotal role in economic development,

contributing 40% to GDP and 25% to exports. Though Pakistan is primarily agrarian, SMEs provide the majority of employment outside the agricultural sector, offering potential solutions to poverty reduction and increased development opportunities.

A sound government strategy is crucial for capacity-building among the youth. Promoting leadership in various sectors and involving the youth in policy formulation and project design through a participatory approach can yield positive outcomes. Financial support for small businesses is vital, emphasizing grants over loans to alleviate the fear of failure and financial burdens that hinder startups globally. Universities in Pakistan can contribute significantly by adopting the 'triple helix' approach, fostering collaboration between government, business, and academia. Aligning new development initiatives with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) would further ensure a comprehensive and sustainable approach. As time is of the essence, Pakistan must prioritize the promotion of SME culture to empower its youth. Drawing inspiration from the success of Bangladesh, which boasts around 7,900,000 SMEs contributing to inclusive development, Pakistan must reevaluate and uplift its SME sector. The government's commitment towards economic growth and youth empowerment hinges on embracing the potential inherent in small and medium enterprises.

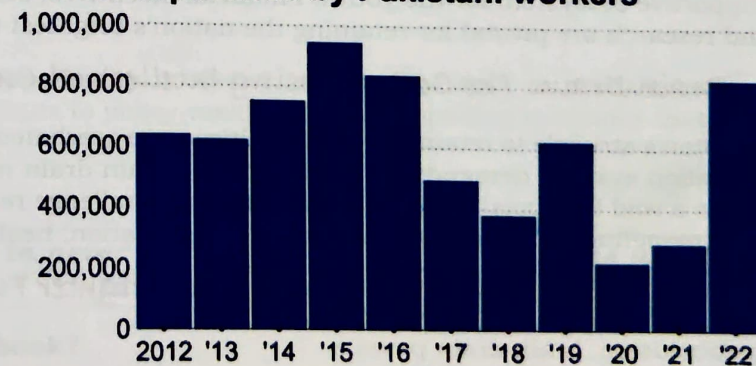
○ Conclusion

The government of Pakistan has the potential to transform challenges into opportunities by strategically investing in education, skills, and avenues for growth. The youth in Pakistan, being a driving force, can spearhead progress, foster healthier families, and propel economic growth, that can eventually lead to a sustainable economic future. This juncture presents a strategic window to allocate significant resources towards the enhancement of technical and vocational training programs. A pivotal component is the establishment of IT institutes tailored for graduate youth, strategically positioned in various cities. Additionally, providing financial support in the form of subsidized credit for projects is imperative. The scope and magnitude of these initiatives should be expansive enough to attract a diverse range of male and female talent. Neglect and subsequent failure to address the prevailing frustration and discontent among the youth may pose the risk of social unrest, reminiscent of the Arab Spring.

➤ Brain Drain in Pakistan: A Looming Threat to National Prosperity

The phenomenon of brain drain has emerged as a pressing concern for Pakistan, with a substantial number of skilled professionals opting to relocate abroad in pursuit of better opportunities. This migration poses significant risks to the nation's long-term growth and development.

Annual departures by Pakistani workers



Source: Pakistan Bureau of Emigration & Overseas Employment

○ The Escalating Brain Drain Crisis

Pakistan is grappling with a severe brain drain crisis. Particularly the first half of this year, witnessed the departure of over 800,000 citizens. Among them, approximately 100,000 were highly trained professionals, including doctors, nurses, engineers, IT experts, and accountants. The surge in emigration is exacerbated by numerous challenges faced by the country. Faltering economy, political instability, rising unemployment, inflation, and the prevalence of extremist ideologies are some of the factors leading to excessive brain drain in Pakistan.

○ Ramifications of Excessive Brain drain Across different Sectors

The consequences of brain drain are far-reaching and substantially affect different sectors crucial for growth and development. For instance, the healthcare system is strained by the loss of doctors and nurses; similarly, technological progress and industrial development face impediments due to the departure of skilled engineers and IT experts. This drain diminishes productivity, hinders economic growth and fosters dependency on expatriate remittances. In short, brain drain is the harbinger of economic decay for the country.

○ Underlying Factors and Challenges

The specter of brain drain emanates out of political instability, social deviance, extremism, inadequate employment opportunities, and economic instability. The lack of transparent governance, inconsistent policies, and security concerns further amplify the challenges faced by skilled professionals.

○ Addressing the Brain Drain Challenge

Efforts to address this crisis necessitate a multi-pronged approach. Prioritizing quality education and job creation, offering competitive salaries, and ensuring policy consistency are vital steps. Establishing transparent governance systems, promoting education, research, and vocational training, and tackling extremist ideologies are crucial for fostering a conducive environment.

○ Collaborative Solutions and Urgent Action

Addressing brain drain requires collaborative efforts from relevant authorities, stakeholders, and the government. Comprehensive reform programs across various sectors are imperative to create an environment that ensures growth and opportunities for citizens. Urgent attention and concerted actions are necessary to reverse the brain drain trend and retain intellectual talent within the country.

○ Incentivizing Stay and Long-Term Vision

Incentivizing skilled individuals to stay in Pakistan involves creating stable politics, a business-friendly environment, and job creation. Emphasizing technical education, vocational training, and ensuring justice and equal opportunity can contribute to curbing brain drain. A long-term vision, as seen in successful cases like China, India, and Bangladesh, is key to reversing this trend and fostering the country's growth.

○ Confronting the Exodus of Youth: A Call to Action

As the youth increasingly seek opportunities abroad, confronting this challenge becomes imperative. The departure of talented youth jeopardizes the nation's progress. Collaboration among the government, private sector, and civil society is crucial to create opportunities, instill confidence, and provide a supportive ecosystem for the youth. Financial incentives, startup support, and investment in education and research are pivotal for retaining the nation's brightest minds.

○ Brain Drain: The Cost of Losing Intellectual Capital

Pakistan's struggle to retain its talented citizens, exacerbated by economic challenges and an inadequate education system, demands urgent attention. Brain drain not only hampers economic growth but also leaves a void in crucial sectors. Addressing this challenge requires a comprehensive approach involving improvements in the business environment, education, healthcare, and societal inclusivity.

○ Conclusion: Nurturing Talent for a Brighter Future

In conclusion, brain drain poses a critical challenge for Pakistan's prosperity across economic, social, cultural, and political spheres. Proactive measures, strategic investments, and collaborative efforts are essential to retain intellectual capital, foster a conducive environment, and build a brighter future for the nation. Tackling the root causes and finding sustainable solutions will determine Pakistan's resilience and stability in the face of global challenges.



Sharing SUCCESS

Mr. Momin Aziz Qureshi

(45th CTP - FSP - CSS 2016)

Tell us something about yourself.

My name is Momin Aziz Qureshi, and I am presently holding the position of Deputy Head of Mission at the Embassy of Pakistan in Minsk. I commenced my educational journey with a bachelor's degree in economics and am a proud member of the Foreign Service of Pakistan (45th Common Training Program, having passed the 2016 CSS).



What is your academic background?

I completed my bachelor's degree in economics with honors from the University of Buckingham in the United Kingdom.

What are your aspirations in life?

At the core of my life goals is a desire to contribute meaningfully to Pakistan's diplomatic efforts. I aspire to continually learn and grow in my career, eventually taking on more significant responsibilities.

Why CSS?

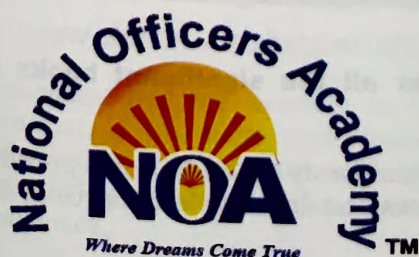
Opting for the CSS was driven by the opportunity it offered to serve Pakistan in a challenging and impactful manner. The potential to contribute to policy-making was a compelling motivator that guided my career path.

Your Favourite Quote

"Our greatest glory is not in never falling, but in rising every time we fall."

Can you tell us about your favourite book?

I have a deep appreciation for literature, and while I have numerous favorite books spanning various genres, I find myself most intrigued by Russian literature. It's challenging for me to single out just one favorite book. However, at the moment, I am reading *Crime and Punishment* by Fyodor Dostoevsky. Russian literature has a unique ability to delve into the complexities of human nature and societal dynamics, offering profound insights that resonate across cultures and time periods.



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When did you start preparing for the exam?

I commenced my preparations for the CSS exam roughly ten months prior to the examination date. However, it was around the six-month mark before the exam when I intensified the focus and dedication to my study regimen.

Has this journey been easy for you and what do you have to say about the difficulty level of these exams?

The journey has been both challenging and rewarding. The CSS exams are known for their difficulty, requiring a comprehensive understanding of various subjects. However, the challenges have been instrumental in shaping my capabilities and preparing me for the responsibilities of public service.

How much time did you give to the preparation?

I committed a substantial portion of my daily schedule to exam preparation, dedicating approximately 8-10 hours each day in the months leading up to the exam. Recognizing the significance of comprehensive and disciplined study, I tried maintaining a balance between preparation and other responsibilities.

What was your strategy for tackling English, often considered the deal-breaker?

Realizing the importance of English proficiency, I focused on regular practice, extensive reading, and honing my writing skills.

Do you believe that the exam content aligns precisely with what one has prepared?

While the exams are comprehensive, there is always an element of unpredictability. However, a well-rounded and thorough preparation ensures that candidates can tackle a wide range of topics more effectively.

What was your approach towards subject selection?

I selected subjects, primarily, based on my academic background and interest. This approach allowed me to leverage my strengths while addressing the requirements of the examination.

How did you divide your preparation time among different subjects?

I adopted a balanced approach, allocating time based on my proficiency in each, and prioritizing weaker areas. This ensured a more comprehensive preparation across all subjects.

Did you consider the scoring trend while choosing your optional subjects or you brushed this aspect off?

While I acknowledged scoring trends, my primary focus was on choosing subjects that aligned with my strengths and interests. Despite receiving advice against selecting Economics, I went ahead with it and wasn't disappointed. My advice to aspirants would be to choose subjects that align with their interests and strengths.

Being aware of your enthusiasm for reading, did you cover all the significant books of contemporary times?

My passion for reading has led me to explore numerous books of contemporary times. This has provided me with a broader understanding of current affairs and global issues—an invaluable resource in the context of CSS exams.



Which subjects did you choose as your optional subjects?

I chose Economics, Public Administration, Gender Studies, International Law and Sociology.

Strategy to Tackle the compulsory Subjects**o Essay**

For the essay paper, my strategy revolved around honing my critical thinking and expressive writing skills. I made a conscious effort to stay updated on current affairs, national and international issues, and diverse perspectives. Developing a structured approach to essay writing, with a clear introduction, well-defined body paragraphs, and a succinct conclusion, allowed me to present my thoughts cohesively.

**o Précis**

In approaching the précis paper, precision and clarity were paramount. I practiced regularly to enhance my summarization skills, ensuring that I could distil complex passages into concise and coherent summaries. Attention to detail and maintaining the original context while minimizing redundancy were key aspects of my strategy.

o Pakistan Affairs & Current Affairs

Understanding the dynamics of Pakistan's history, politics, and socio-economic factors was crucial for Pakistan Affairs. For Current Affairs, staying abreast of the latest developments globally and nationally was essential. I relied on a combination of newspapers, journals, and online resources to ensure a well-rounded perspective. Connecting historical events with contemporary issues allowed me to provide a comprehensive understanding in my answers.

o General Science & Ability

General Science & Ability demanded a mix of quantitative and qualitative skills. I dedicated time to strengthen my analytical and logical reasoning abilities. Regular practice with numerical problem-solving, pattern recognition, and critical thinking exercises proved beneficial. Additionally, keeping myself updated on scientific advancements and general knowledge helped tackle the science component effectively.

o Islamic Studies

For Islamic Studies, my strategy involved a thorough understanding of Islamic history, teachings, and their applications in contemporary contexts. I relied on authoritative texts and diverse interpretations to develop a nuanced perspective. Integrating ethical and moral dimensions into my responses allowed me to present a comprehensive understanding of Islamic Studies.

Bulls' Eye Hit in the Optional Subjects**o How did you substantiate your answers?**

I substantiated my answers in the optional subjects through a multifaceted approach. First and foremost, a thorough understanding of the subject matter was crucial. I supplemented textual information with relevant and recent examples to demonstrate practical application. Additionally, referencing scholarly works, case studies, and empirical evidence added depth and credibility to my responses.

○ Significance of Illustrations- flowcharts, maps and figures

Incorporating visual aids such as maps, and figures was instrumental in enhancing the clarity and impact of my answers. These visuals served to simplify complex concepts, improve comprehension, and make my responses more visually appealing.

○ Length of answer and number of arguments

Balancing the length of the answer and the number of arguments was a key consideration. I aimed for a concise yet comprehensive approach, focusing on quality over quantity.

○ One Window solution to score well in the optional subjects

I believe that adopting a one-window solution approach is pivotal for scoring well in optional subjects, synthesizing diverse sources of information into a cohesive and integrated understanding. Rather than relying on fragmented knowledge, I aimed to present a holistic view of the subject, incorporating various perspectives and dimensions.



Can you share your experience at the National Officers Academy?

My experience at the National Officers Academy was incredibly valuable, particularly in preparing for the Viva Voce. The academy's rigorous training, coupled with exposure to diverse perspectives and practical exercises, played a crucial role in enhancing my overall preparation.

Do you have any specific advice or a special message for CSS candidates?

For CSS candidates, I would emphasize the importance of well-rounded preparation. Beyond mastering the subjects, focus on developing critical thinking and effective communication skills. Stay abreast of current affairs, be adaptable, and approach the exam with a positive mindset. I would like to reiterate that resilience and dedication are key to overcoming the challenges of the CSS examination.

What is the most effective approach for crafting responses to achieve the highest marks in the written section of the CE?

The optimal strategy involves ensuring responses exhibit clarity, coherence, and relevance. Success, in my belief, hinges on understanding the question thoroughly, organizing answers logically, and furnishing well-supported arguments.

How did you structure your essay?

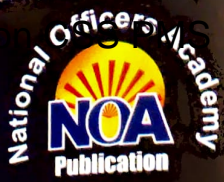
I adopted a structured approach, beginning with a clear introduction that outlined the main points I intended to address. The body of the essay was organized logically, with each paragraph dedicated to a specific aspect of the topic. I ensured a smooth transition between paragraphs and concluded with a concise summary that reinforced my main arguments.

Is there a word limit to consider when writing answers?

I believe that while it's essential to be mindful of time constraints, quality should take precedence over quantity. I would recommend aspirants to focus on delivering well-articulated, substantive answers within the allocated time, paying attention to the question's requirements and striving for a balance between depth and conciseness in responses.

To whom do you attribute the credit for your success?

First and foremost, I attribute the credit for my success to the Almighty Allah. His blessings have been the cornerstone of my journey. Additionally, the unwavering support of my family and mentors played a pivotal role.



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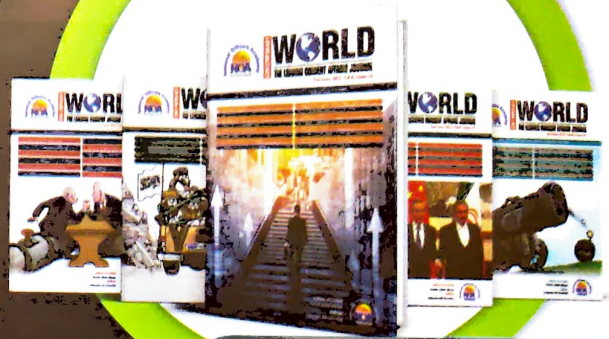
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